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PART VII.

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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

A F F A I R S   O F   P E R S I A.

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July to September 1906.

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227	" ..	253 Tel.	30,	Joint advance. Minister for Foreign Affairs agrees that details should be settled at Tehran, and has instructed Russian Minister accordingly ..	158

## ERRATA.

Page 12, line 8. For "Ala-ed-Dowleh" read "Ala-ed-Sultaneh."  
 Page 64, No. 89, line 1. For "No. 182" read "No. 162."  
 Page 123, No. 156, line 2. For "No. 114" read "No. 214."  
 Page 149, No. 202, line 5. For "M. Zoolski" read "M. Isvolsky."

CONFIDENTIAL.

## Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Persia.

PART VII.

[22157]

No 1.

*Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 2.)*

(No. 433. Very Confidential.)

Sir,

*Therapia, June 26, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Persian Ambassador called upon me three days ago, and expressed his increasing anxiety at the number of Turkish troops that were being concentrated in the Passova district, notwithstanding the assurances so frequently given to him by the Porte that the Imperial Government did not contemplate a forward movement or any aggression against Persia.

His information led him to believe that, notwithstanding these pacific assurances, five or six more battalions of the IVth Army Corps had recently been ordered to proceed to Passova, and that there were at the present moment about thirty battalions of infantry concentrated in that district.

Prince Riza Khan said that his Government was seriously alarmed, and had again instructed him to consult with me and the Russian Ambassador, and to report whether we were prepared to make fresh representations to the Ottoman Government of a nature which would deter them from a policy which was rapidly leading to an inevitable conflict.

Last night the Russian Ambassador said that he had received a telegram from his Government in the same sense as that of Mr. Grant Duff's No. 167, which you were good enough to repeat to me in your telegram No. 104 of yesterday, and that he had replied that he would consult with me as to the steps to be taken at the Porte. His Excellency further said that he had during the course of the day sent a message to the Sultan by a Palace official, who had called upon him, and pointed out the danger of the policy which was being followed by His Majesty on the Persian frontier.

I told M. Zinoview that, although I thought it probable that the number of Turkish troops concentrated on the Persian frontier was exaggerated, there seemed to be no doubt that they were being steadily increased, and the frontier tribes thereby stimulated and encouraged to expect a forward military movement into Azerbaijan, which would give them the long-desired opportunity of plundering the country. I told him that I had accordingly spoken with considerable force to the Grand Vizier on the subject in the afternoon, and he said that he would support my representations without delay and as energetically as possible.

I gave the Grand Vizier a summary of the military information I had received from our Consuls and others, as reported in Colonel Surtees' despatch inclosed herewith. His Highness said that these numbers were grossly exaggerated, and that instead of thirty-two infantry battalions being at Passova there were only eighteen battalions in the whole district, of which four were Nizams, four Redifs, and two Hamidieh battalions.

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His Highness admitted, however, that four more Hamidié battalions had been lately ordered to proceed from the Diarbekir district of the IVth Army Corps to Passova, but that they had not started as the Minister of War had not the money required for their equipment, commissariat, &c.

His Highness further admitted that the report of the state of affairs on the frontier, described in Mr. Mark Sykes' private letter of the 3rd May, a copy of which I had the honour to send you in my despatch No. 431, was remarkably correct, and he proceeded to give me confidentially an account of his negotiations with the Sultan. He said that His Majesty had been frightened by General Abdullah Pasha, in whose hands this matter principally lay, who had told him that if he withdrew his troops from Passova all the Turkish tribes and Hamidié officers would be discontented, and that His Majesty's prestige would suffer so seriously that he might be obliged to employ force to prevent a revolution of his own Kurdish subjects. These arguments, and the personal influence of Abdullah Pasha and his chauvinistic supporters at the Palace, had made a deep impression upon the Sultan, and though he had agreed to the appointment of Joint Commissioners he was disinclined to allow them to report what was incontestably the fact, that Passova was situated within the Persian frontier and should be evacuated. His Highness said that he had staked his influence and reputation with the Sultan by assuring His Majesty that if he agreed to withdraw his troops from Passova he would manage to do so without any loss of prestige to the Caliphate, and that possibly they might get some compensation in the direction of Soujboulak and Bayazid, where Persian troops had occupied some places which were clearly outside their proper frontier. Zeki Pasha and the other Ottoman Commissioners were due at Mosul to-morrow, and would reach Passova in four or five days. These officers left without seeing him, and he did not know what instructions they had got from the Palace or the Minister of War. It was quite possible they had been told to report against the evacuation of Passova. But they had no papers with them to prove their case, and when their report came in his Highness would see to it that a report was sent to the Sultan establishing beyond doubt the Persian claim to Passova.

I pointed out to his Highness that it was his duty not to leave the Sultan in any doubt as to the grave danger of the course which was guiding his policy for some time past in regard to this question; that if the Hamidié regiments once got out of hand there was no saying how far disturbances would spread, and that not only was there a strong probability of there extending to the Bagdad and Bussorah regions, where already there was a good deal of disorder and unrest, but that they might also take a backward course and set up a revolution in Asia Minor, where the condition of affairs in the Caucasus was already having its effect. I said that the maintenance of tranquillity in the regions of the Persian Gulf was a matter of deep concern to His Majesty's Government, that frontier disturbances must necessarily peculiarly affect the Russian Government at this moment, and that if Turkey provoked by her policy and action a conflagration the consequences, however disagreeable to us, might be very serious for Turkey.

His Highness said I might rely upon his doing all in his power to come to an amicable arrangement with the Persian Ambassador. He was quite aware of the dangers towards which their policy in regard to this question was leading them. His adversaries, however, were numerous and energetic, and the struggle he was carrying on almost single-handed was rapidly wearing him out. His Highness, who looked worn and tired, concluded by informing me that the condition of the IVth Army Corps was very unsatisfactory, and that he had just succeeded in getting Perter Pasha, who had been Military Attaché with the Japanese army in Manchuria, appointed as Chief of the Staff, and sent to Bagdad at the head of a Military Commission to reorganize the whole corps.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Colonel Surtees to Sir N. O'Connor.

Constantinople, June 22, 1908.

(No. 34.)  
Sir,

I HAVE the honour to bring to your notice the large concentration of troops which has been recently effected between Mosul and the Persian frontier.

Reliable information places the forces thus concentrated at—

32 battalions of infantry,  
1 battalion of mounted infantry,  
4 battalions of artillery,

whilst several regiments of Hamidié cavalry are under orders to proceed to the frontier.

The above detail probably represents a force of not less than 20,000 men, and 43,000 armed tribesmen are said to be merely awaiting the word to swoop into the Province of Azerbaijan.

The dislocation of the troops is as follows:—

At Serdesht. . . . .	6 battalions.
At Passova . . . . .	15 battalions, 4 batteries, Military hospital, Head-quarter staff.
At Rovanduz . . . . .	3 battalions, Military hospital, Supply depôt.
At Hamidié . . . . .	1 battalion.
At Erbil . . . . .	5 battalions, Military hospital, Supply depôt.
At Sulimanieh . . . . .	1 battalion, " M.I.
At Mosul . . . . .	1 battalion.

Military posts have also been established at Sinjar, Zakho, Rania, Koi Sanjak, Alton, Kieupru, Kerkuk, and on the east bank of the Zab River, midway between Mosul and Rovanduz.

Of the armed tribesmen—

Tribesmen.	Where Stationed.
6,000 under Sheikh Sadik . . . . .	Are about Serdesht.
4,000 Mengor . . . . .	Between Passova and Hamidié.
3,000 Khoshnaw . . . . .	Near Rovanduz.
8,000 Bilbas . . . . .	East of Rania.
1,000 Sheikh Bilel . . . . .	Between Erbil and Koi Sanjak.
8,000 Hamawand . . . . .	West of Sulimanieh.
10,000 Joff . . . . .	South of Sulimanieh.
3,500 Girdi . . . . .	West of Rania.
43,000	

These, with the exception of the Khoshnaw, are mounted.

The force at Passova is supplied from Erbil—a nine days' journey.

The five battalions at Erbil are destined to join those at Passova.

The six battalions at Serdesht are nominally under the command of Sheikh Sadik, but their business is to prevent him from making an unauthorized and sudden forward movement.

The weak point in the Turkish dispositions appears to be the line Sulimanieh-Kerkuk, along which a boldly-led mounted force might raid westwards even to Mosul, or raise a Shia insurrection in Bagdad.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) H. CONYERS SURTEES, Colonel,  
Military Attaché.



[22377]

No. 2.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 2.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 29th June last, regarding quarantine on undemarcated Persian-Afghan frontier.

*India Office, June 30, 1906.*

Inclosure in No. 2.

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*June 29, 1906.*

QUARANTINE on undemarcated portion of Perso-Afghan frontier. Your telegram of 14th April.

Departure in near future, to start quarantine on Afghan frontier, of Russian doctor, Frank, whom Shaokat has recognized as head of quarantine, is reported by Captain Watson, who arrived at Birjand on the 23rd instant. Critical state of relations on undemarcated border is known to us from inspection report recently received from Keyes. Disastrous results would follow from Afghan attack on Russian or Belgian Customs or quarantine officials, to which very little might lead. It might perhaps be well to reconsider question of making some representation to Persian Government before establishment of cordon, should Watson's report prove well founded.

[22136]

No. 3.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Grant Duff.*

(No. 89.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, July 2, 1906.*

YEZD incident: See your telegram No. 171 of the 30th June.

If there is real danger of an anti-foreign outbreak, British subjects should remove to the coast. We could not send an adequate force far inland, and Consular guards could not give efficient protection in the event of disturbances.

Although Ziegler's firm is under British protection, we should be glad to know the nationality of their present agent, and of the agent concerned in the incident.

[22805]

No. 4.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 4.)*

(No. 173.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 4, 1906.*

ZIEGLER'S agents at Yezd. Your telegram No. 89.

Both the agent who was expelled and his successor are Swiss, but it is impossible to distinguish between the nationality of a firm and that of its agents in a place like Yezd.

Pending instructions to the contrary, I propose to support any claim which Ziegler may prefer for damage to his business.

22839]

No. 5.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 5.)*

(No. 174.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 5, 1906.*

PERSO-TURKISH frontier dispute.

I am informed by the German Chargé d'Affaires that, according to a telegram which he has received from Constantinople, it is not intended that the Turkish Commissioner should reach the frontier, and that there is no likelihood of the Turkish Government effecting an amicable solution of the difficulty.

[22936]

No. 6.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 6.)*

Sir,

*India Office, July 5, 1906.*

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to acknowledge the receipt of Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 20th ultimo, relative to the proposed tour of His Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed in September next on the frontier of Khorassan.

In reply, I am to say that Mr. Morley concurs in Sir E. Grey's view of the subject, and has requested the Government of India to inform Major Sykes that His Majesty's Government consider that the tour would be inopportune in present circumstances, and to instruct him not to undertake it.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[23086]

No. 7.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 7.)*

(No. 175.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 7, 1906.*

ZIEGLER'S agents at Yezd.

Your telegram No. 90.

It is not denied that the agent struck a boy for rudeness; but this would hardly seem to justify his being driven out of Yezd, having his life threatened, and the business of his firm disorganized.

Life in many parts of Persia will become intolerable if we acquiesce in a European being treated in this fashion, and it seems particularly desirable, in the present chaotic state of the country, to show firmness with the Persian Government.

I am collecting information as to the state of security at Yezd. The journey from that place to the coast occupies several weeks.

[23134]

No. 8.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)*

(No. 154.)

Sir,

*Gulshah, June 11, 1906.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 70 of the 8th ultimo, I have the honour to report that on more than one occasion during the winter the Mushir-ed-Dowleh made vague complaints against Agha Bedr, British Agent at Lingah.

I promised his Excellency to inquire into the matter. From the report furnished to me by His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire, it appears that Agha Bedr's father was British Agent before him, and that, although Agha Bedr was only appointed Agent on his father's death, he had for some years been doing the work.

Major Cox's predecessors had a high opinion of Agha Bedr, and Colonel Kemball, late Consul-General at Bushire, on leaving, wrote him a letter expressing appreciation of the manner in which the business of the Agency had been conducted. Major Cox further states in his report that he considers Agha Bedr a thoroughly reliable and deserving Government servant, who looks after British interests within his charge with resolution and vigilance.

[1669]



I communicated the substance of Major Cox's report to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, and added that in the absence of any proved misconduct on the part of our Agent at Lingah I regretted my inability to take further steps in the matter.

My long experience of Persia convinces me that a complaint on the part of the Persian Government against a British official is an almost certain sign that that official is doing his work well.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[23136]

No. 9.

Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 156.)

Sir,

Gulahak, June 16, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to report that, after much pressure on my part, the Persian Government have appointed a special official to settle outstanding British claims in Tehran, Shiraz, Bushire, and Kerman.

The number of our local claims is small, so that I hope he will be able to leave for the south at an early date.

In the present state of the country it is impossible to say whether any large measure of success will attend the efforts of this official, but his appointment is at all events a move in the right direction, and I hope a few of the more flagrant cases may be settled.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[23137]

No. 10.

Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 157.)

Sir,

Gulahak, June 18, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch addressed to the Government of India by His Majesty's Consul in Seistan, calling attention to several incidents which have occurred at Nusretabad since the riot of the 28th March last, and showing that unless steps are taken to punish the persons implicated in the disturbances the situation may become serious.

In spite of constant pressure on my part the Persian Government have, as far as I am aware, taken no steps to arrest the rioters, and have as yet paid no compensation for the damage done to the Consular Dispensary.

In his inclosed despatch Captain Macpherson, after giving a number of instances in which British Indian subjects have been molested, states that the people have completely got out of hand, and that trade is at a standstill.

The official sent by the Persian Government to inquire into the disturbances of March last must now be near Nusretabad, but although he is friendly to us, I doubt whether he will be able to bring the offenders to justice.

At the close of his despatch Captain Macpherson states that the plague has got a firm grip of the province, and is spreading in every direction.

Later news which has reached me tends to confirm this information.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure 1 in No. 10.

Consul Macpherson to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Seistan, May 10, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to submit, with reference to my telegram, dated the 4th May, 1906, a statement of several incidents which have occurred of late, all of which show that British prestige in Seistan has suffered very greatly since the disturbances at the end of March; and that unless early steps are taken to deal with the rioters, the situation is likely to become a very serious one.

2. On the 22nd April an accusation was made by some Saiyids of Hussainabad that one of our sowars had brought a Seistani woman into the Consulate at night. Saiyid Hyder (who took a prominent part in the attack on the Consulate Hospital) is known to have had this woman beaten in order to force her to confess that she had accompanied the sowar, but she declined to do so. The matter was reported to the Deputy-Governor, who promised to send for Saiyid Hyder and to investigate the matter, but up to date he has failed to do so, and there is little prospect of his taking any action in the matter now. This incident caused considerable excitement at the time, and, had the woman not refused to confess, might have lead to further rioting.

3. On the 27th April the Consulate muleteers, proceeding to cut "khasil," were stopped by some people of Hussainabad, who abused them, and told them that, if they came that road again they would be beaten. The muleteers had gone to the cornfields by a track south of Hussainabad, well away from houses. They had not trespassed on any crops, nor had they in any way interfered with the people—in fact, they avoided inhabited places, as they did not wish to expose themselves to infection. The Deputy-Governor sent for two men who were in the crowd, but finding that they were cultivators of Mullah Mehdi, he set them free at once, and has declined to take any further action.

4. Chait Singh, an Indian trader, accompanied by Ghulam Muhamed and Moti Ram, Indian traders, proceeded to Burj-i-Afghan on the 3rd May, to collect some debts. Having completed their business at that place they visited Banjar on their return journey, and proceeded to the house of Kalantar Mahomed Amir, who owed some money to Chait Singh. As they did not know which house the Kalantar lived in, they had to inquire their way, and after passing through a considerable portion of the bazaar they arrived at his house, and he came out to talk with them. Whilst talking, two other men came up, one of whom ordered the traders to leave the town. They protested that they had come there to collect money, whereupon he struck Moti Ram on the back with a stick, and the traders, not wishing to cause a disturbance, left the town. They had proceeded but a short distance when a servant of the Kalantar called out to them to stop. They did so, and were informed that if they came again the next day the money would be paid to them at an observation post outside the town. They remained conversing for some fifteen minutes, during which time some more people collected and gradually surrounded them. Some persons commenced to throw lumps of hardened mud, which struck both the traders and their horses, and the crowd quickly became transformed into a riotous mob, the traders, only with considerable difficulty, escaping without serious hurt. A servant of theirs, who was not mounted, was seized by the mob, severely beaten, his clothes torn off, and a sum of 50 toman, the property of the traders, was stolen from him as he was lying on the ground. He was rescued by Khan Mahomed Khan, who threatened to fire on the mob if they did not release him. On ascertaining the above facts, I wrote to the Deputy-Governor that unless immediate steps were taken in this case I would decline to hold myself responsible in future for the acts of British subjects. A copy of this letter is attached for information.

The Deputy-Governor in his reply stated that the traders were to blame, as they forced quarantine; he also stated that the men were not attacked, that he did not believe their money had been stolen, and that he declined to take any action in the matter.

The traders state that they met with no opposition when entering Banjar, which, at present, can only be approached by one road owing to floods; they are positive that there were no quarantine guards on this road when they entered, and that they left the town as soon as they were told to do so.

5. The Deputy-Governor has refused to take any action in the case of Lowani, Afghan, already referred to in my diary for the 12th April. He promised to send for Muhamed Azim, the defendant, but has failed to do so, stating that his messengers could not get into Miankangi owing to excessive floods. As a matter of fact there is absolutely no difficulty on the road to Miankangi.

6. The Deputy-Governor promised to send me a list of the ringleaders of the rioters, who destroyed the Consulate Hospital, on the second day after the riot, but he did not send it until four days ago, and then it only contained the names of eight persons, although over 200 were present.

7. A review of the above-mentioned incidents, taken in conjunction with others which have been previously reported, shows how severely our prestige has suffered, both in the estimation of the officials and of the people.

Trade is at a standstill, the traders having closed their shops, as they find it impossible to carry on their business under present conditions; if they even endeavour to collect a debt, a crowd collects, and they are intimidated. They have been told that if any persons from Bunjar are punished on account of the assault already referred to, that they must be prepared to take the consequences.

The people have got completely out of hand, as they see that they can riot with impunity, and the longer they remain unpunished the more quarrelsome will they become; and incidents similar to those mentioned above may be expected to become more frequent and to increase in gravity.

The traders are seriously considering whether they can remain here in safety if protection to render life and property more secure is not afforded them.

Even beggars do not hesitate now to call out insulting remarks when British subjects pass them in the streets. An incident of this kind occurred yesterday when Captain Kelly and I were walking, unattended, to the custom-house, a group of beggars openly called us "Kaffirs," and made use of other similar opprobrious expressions.

The Deputy-Governor remains in Bala Khana, where he is difficult to approach, as this place is cut off from the city by floods. He protests that he is doing all he possibly can to help, but there is very little evidence to prove that this help is of any material advantage; even when he admits the necessity of punishing certain persons, he invariably falls back on the weakness of his position here as an excuse for his inaction.

The admission by both the Tehran and Seistan authorities that they are not in a position to punish the ringleaders of the recent riot would seem a sufficient justification for us to move up troops from Rohat to protect British interests here until such time as the Persian authorities are in a position to guarantee that our interests are adequately safeguarded, and I would accordingly recommend that this step should now be taken.

The Persian Government has been given every opportunity of dealing with the situation if it had wished to do so, as it is now six weeks since the riot occurred, but no action has been taken. Further delay in the punishment of the ringleaders is to be very strongly deprecated, not only on account of the increased loss to British prestige, which such delay must necessarily involve, but because, until the ringleaders have been punished and law and order restored in the district, it will be quite impossible to take any effective measures to combat plague, which has now got a firm grip on the country, and is spreading in every direction.

8. A copy of this letter has been forwarded to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran and to His Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. D. MACPHERSON, Captain,  
His Britannic Majesty's Consul for Seistan and Kain.

Inclosure 2 in No. 10.

Consul Macpherson to Deputy-Governor, Seistan.

(After compliments.)

May 5, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Chet Singh and two other traders were assaulted in Bunjar the day before yesterday, and their servant, a Persian subject, was also severely beaten and robbed of 50 tomans, the property of the traders.

The attack appears to have been an entirely unprovoked one, and due to the instigation of Mahomed Amir, Kalantar.

As this is the third incident of abuse or assault on British subjects within the last ten days, irrespective of the attack on the Consulate Hospital and subsequent disturbances, in none of which cases has any attempt been made to punish the offenders or protect the property and persons of British subjects, I have the honour to state that, unless immediate steps are taken in the present case, I shall be unable to hold myself responsible henceforth for the acts of British subjects, and shall be reluctantly compelled to submit a most unfavourable report to my Government regarding your personal attitude towards the interests of British subjects.

In view of the very friendly relations which have hitherto always existed between

yourself and this Consulate, no one would regret the above step more than myself, but there is a limit beyond which it is impossible to overlook matters, and that point has now been reached.

[23138]

No. 11.

Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 158. Confidential.)

Sir.

Gulhek, June 18, 1906.

I THINK it my duty to draw the attention of His Majesty's Government to the serious condition of affairs in Persia, a condition which has since the middle of May been aggravated by the inability of His Majesty the Shah to transact business owing to illness.

I would in the first place remind you that within the last few months disturbances, more or less grave, have taken place in the following important towns and provinces: Tehran, Meshed, Seistan, Kerman, Kermanshah, Hamadan, Shiraz, Fars, and Resht. Two of the Shah's sons, Shoa-es-Sultaneh and Azad-es-Sultan, have been expelled by the people from Shiraz and Resht respectively, while the Jellal-ed-Dowleh, His Majesty's nephew, was recently summarily ejected from the Governorship of Kurdistan, narrowly escaping with his life.

The dispatch of a Special Commissioner to redress grievances in Fars has proved a disastrous failure, and over 300 people of all classes (including Kajar Princes) are now in asylum at His Majesty's Consulate, and decline to leave the protection of the British flag until the Persian Government shall give His Majesty's Legation a written assurance that their grievances will be redressed. In spite of every effort on my part, the Grand Vizier either cannot or will not prevail on them to withdraw.

It is hardly necessary again to report that on most of the southern roads brigandage is carried on with impunity, the last British victim being Mr. Rice, of the Church Missionary Society, who was attacked and robbed at midday near Shulgistan, on the main road between Ispahan and Shiraz.

The Mollahs of Tehran are now united against the Grand Vizier, and are clamouring for the reforms in the Administration referred to in my despatch No. 24 of the 31st January last. The town is in an unsatisfactory state, and no Persian is allowed out after sunset, and Europeans only with passes. The streets are patrolled by Cossacks, of whose loyalty even their commanding officer is by no means certain.

Plague is raging in Seistan and not unlikely to spread to Khorassan, while Turkish troops are still encamped on Persian soil.

Luristan, Kurdistan, and part of Azerbaijan and Arabistan may be said to be in a state of chronic rebellion.

As you are aware, in Persia such Government as can be said to exist emanates from the Sovereign, without whose assent even the most trivial orders cannot be issued. The immediate result of His Majesty's illness has been an increase in the prevailing confusion, and all government worthy of the name has practically ceased pending His Majesty's recovery. But this is not the worst. The Mushir-ed-Dowleh, and indeed all the more respectable officials, candidly admit that the orders of the central Government are only obeyed when it happens to suit the convenience of the provincial authorities, who know well that they will almost certainly escape punishment in case of disobedience. In addition to this the Treasury is not only empty, but most of the officials and a large proportion of the army have received no pay for months, and are naturally discontented and mutinous.

Foreign claims, which must now amount to a relatively large sum, are almost entirely disregarded, and do not tend to decrease.

I may here cite two cases, trivial, perhaps, in themselves, which give some idea of the effiteness of the Government. The Netherlands Minister was recently driving in Tehran when a young Seyyed threw a stone at him, nearly putting out his eye, and inflicting a painful wound. His Excellency made a formal complaint to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, but it was only after some trouble that he succeeded in obtaining even inadequate satisfaction. The Mushir, while apologising for the boy's act, said that in the present state of the town the Persian Government dared not cause a Seyyed (of whom there are hundreds of thousands) to be beaten. So the offender escaped with five days' imprisonment, which in this country means that he received no punishment whatever.

[1660]



Not long ago a caravan carrying a valuable consignment of lambskins belonging to Russian merchants was proceeding from Ispahan to Tehran, when the Ijlal-ed-Dowleh, a Kajar Prince and a near relation of the Shoa-es-Sultaneh, attacked and seized the mules and flung the skins into the desert, doing damage estimated at 40,000 tomans (7,000L.). The only excuse given was that the mules were required for the Shoa-es-Sultaneh's harem, which was proceeding north, and the Ijlal has not been punished. The Russian Legation are endeavouring to obtain compensation. It is interesting to note that the Ijlal-ed-Dowleh is the same ruffian who not long ago brought an unfounded accusation against His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz. His progress north in charge of the Prince's harem has been marked by other deeds of violence, one of which was to force the toll-bars on the Kum road, thereby causing a loss to the Persian Transport Company of some 80 tomans.

The state of things to which I have the honour to draw attention, taken in connection with the history of this country for the last two or three years (see the annual reports on Persia), may, I think, be described without exaggeration as most unsatisfactory, not to say dangerous.

Every responsible man in this part of Persia, whether European or native, would, I am confident, bear out all I have said, and many important Persian officials have openly expressed to me their belief that the end of Persia as an independent State is not far off.

It should not be lost sight of that Azerbaijan, Ghilan, Mazanderan, and Khorassan lie within the shadow of Russia, and commercially are practically part of that Empire. Any series of events which profoundly modify the existing condition of Russia will inevitably affect Northern Persia, and I had the honour last autumn to point this out in my telegram No. 179 of the 22nd December, 1905.

In these circumstances I venture to think that His Majesty's Government would be well advised to consider what steps should be taken—and any such steps to be effectual must be taken soon—to prevent serious trouble in this country. Some form of foreign control will before long be necessary. Is such control to be carried out by England and Russia alone? There are indications that Germany is not indifferent to Persian affairs, and any delay in taking action might bring about a situation of which Morocco and Egypt have furnished examples in the past and might profoundly affect the future of India.

First and foremost, some form of European control of the finances is essential. The Minister of Finance, an intelligent man who was educated at Balliol, and M. Naus frankly admit that this Department is in a state of absolute chaos, and that but a small portion of the revenue ever reaches the Treasury. There is, I understand, little prospect of obtaining a substantial loan, and it is clear that without adequate funds even the miserable Administration which exists cannot be carried on.

In making this report I have been careful to avoid anything like exaggeration. It is difficult to convey to any one unacquainted with Persian methods any connected idea of the utter rottenness of the Government, of the venality of the officials, the absence of all justice, the stupid cruelty of the punishments, and the degradation of the Court.

The men who are now mismanaging the affairs of this unhappy country are incapable of introducing adequate reforms; and were such reforms introduced, the officials are so corrupt and ignorant that they could not carry them out, even in the unlikely event of their wishing to do so.

There is, in my opinion, little hope that the situation will improve. Sooner or later the crash will come if the Persian Government are left to themselves, and it is for His Majesty's Government to determine whether they will solve the difficulty in agreement with Russia, or wait for an international settlement, the consequences of which may be far-reaching and perhaps not to our interest.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[23140]

No. 12.

Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 160.)

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a translation of a note from the Grand Vizier, in which his Highness promises to pay within one month from the 27th ultimo

Gulabek, June 20, 1906.

the interest due on the loans made by His Majesty's Government to the Persian Government through the Imperial Bank of Persia.

Mr. Rabino has not yet reported to me that the money has been paid, and on the 27th June next I shall again call the attention of the Atabeg-i-Azam to the matter, if the Persian Government have not lodged the amount due.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 12.

Atabeg-i-Azam to Mr. E. Grant Duff.

May 27, 1906.

I HAVE received your note of the 26th May respecting the interest on 290,000L. due to the Imperial Bank of Persia. I have to inform you that I had already pressed the Ministry of the Customs to pay the money as soon as possible. When I received your letter the Minister of the Customs was present, and I verbally pressed him again. This money will be paid to the Imperial Bank within a month.

[23141]

No. 13.

Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 161.)

Sir,

Gulabek, June 20, 1906.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 158 of the 12th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a note to the Persian Government regarding the removal by the Russian telegraph officials at Meshed to their own office of the battery and wire of the Seistan telegraph line.

Although I have received no reply from the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, I hear from His Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed that the battery and wire have now been restored to their original position.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 13.

Mr. E. Grant Duff to Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

HIS Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed reports that on the 9th instant the Russian telegraph officials in Khorassan removed the battery of the Seistan telegraph line into the Russian office and then cut the end of the wire and also took it into the Russian office. The Russian signallers can now cut off both the British and Persian offices at will and monopolize the line.

I have the honour to request your Excellency to be so good as to inform me whether the above action of the Russian telegraph officials was taken with the knowledge and permission of the Persian Government, and, if not, what measures they propose to adopt to restore the arrangements hitherto existing on the Meshed-Seistan line to their former position.

June 12, 1906.

[23142]

No. 14.

Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 162.)

Sir,

Gulabek, June 20, 1906.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 161 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of notes addressed to the Grand Vizier and Mushir-ed-Dowleh regarding affairs at Shiraz.

On the 8th instant His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz was warned that a number of

the inhabitants of that town proposed to take "bast" at the Consulate. Mr. Grahame immediately communicated with the Governor-General of Fars and the Karguzar, but apparently no steps were taken by these officials to preserve order, and on the 9th instant over 200 people of all classes proceeded to take refuge at His Majesty's Consulate. They are still encamped in Mr. Grahame's garden, and as the Grand Vizier has not even answered my notes it would appear that his Highness is either unable or unwilling to induce them to leave.

The Ala-ed-Dowleh, who is one of the few Persian officials of any capacity, has now been appointed Governor-General of Fars. He left yesterday for Shiraz, and before his departure I had a long interview with him. He showed me a document in the Shah's own handwriting giving him full powers. He earnestly begged me to help him, and I promised to do so provided that on his side he undertook to settle outstanding British claims and generally to take measures to prevent our trade being driven out of Fars. His Excellency was most cordial and sensible, and expressed the opinion that he would be able to conciliate the people of Fars if the Shoa-es-Saltaneh was not allowed to interfere with him. He said that the whole country was in a terrible state, and that the central Government was gradually losing its hold on the provinces. Previous to my interview with the Ala-ed-Dowleh I had seen the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, who verbally promised to write to me officially to the effect that the new Governor-General of Fars had received full powers to redress grievances. The great difficulty of the situation is this: The Shah sold to the Shoa-es-Saltaneh last year a number of Crown lands in Fars, and the Prince not only took these lands but seized a large number of other properties marching with them. Unless the Ala-ed-Dowleh is able to restore these lands to their owners and the Crown lands to the State I fear his efforts to conciliate the people may be unavailing. The situation has been much complicated by the arrest in Tehran of the Kavam-ul-Mulk and the Nasir-ul-Mulk, both prominent Shirazis, and the former the greatest landowner in Fars. They are still in prison, and the Persian Government are endeavouring to make them pay large fines. Their restoration to liberty would probably create a good impression in Shiraz, but I fear that the Shoa-es-Saltaneh, who at present has the ear of His Majesty the Shah, will do all he can to prevent order being restored in Fars, as by so doing he will be able to discredit the Ala-ed-Dowleh.

I am secretly informed that some prominent persons at Court are trying to persuade the Shah that the troubles in Fars, and especially the presence of a large number of His Majesty's subjects at the British Consulate, are due to the intrigues of Mr. Grahame. It is hardly necessary to say that this is totally untrue. The Shoa-es-Saltaneh, who doubtless is the author of these unfounded complaints, is naturally furious at being ousted from a rich province which his Highness appears to regard as his peculiar property, and the Persian Government are perhaps unmoved at the action of the people of Shiraz, who are desperate, and see no hope of redress except in foreign intervention.

However, I have some hope that a strong and relatively honest man, like the Ala-ed-Dowleh, may inaugurate a better state of things, and his Excellency, who left at midday yesterday, promised me to reach Shiraz as quickly as possible. Till his arrival I fear the people will not leave the Consulate, but I shall continue to endeavour to effect a settlement.

As a comment on the statements of the Persian Minister in London that the accounts given of the troubles in Shiraz had been exaggerated (see your telegram No. 9 of the 10th January, 1906), I transmit a photograph,\* taken at the time, of the people in "bast" at the great mosque as a protest against the cruelty and oppression of the Shoa-es-Saltaneh. The Ala-ed-Dowleh has learned much since his return to Persia, and I do not think would now say that the bad state of the country had been exaggerated.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure 1 in No. 14.

Mr. E. Grant Duff to Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

June 10, 1906.

ON the 8th instant His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz was warned that a number of the inhabitants of that town intended to take "bast" at the British Consulate.

\* Not reproduced.

Mr. Grahame immediately communicated with the Vazir Makhsus and the Karguzar. I am not at present aware whether those officials took any steps to prevent these persons invading His Majesty's Consulate, but yesterday over 300 men, belonging to all classes, from Princes downwards, took "bast" in Mr. Grahame's garden, and refused to leave his premises.

The grievances of the people of Fars are well known to the Persian Government, who would appear to have taken no measures as yet to redress them.

It must, I am confident, be clear to your Excellency that the present state of affairs cannot be allowed to continue, and I request you to lay this note before His Majesty the Shah, with a view to order being speedily restored at Shiraz.

It is hardly necessary to say that His Majesty's Government, to whom I have telegraphed on the subject, will hold the Persian Government responsible for any damage to the persons or property of British subjects in Fars.

In conclusion, I have the honour to request your Excellency to inform me as soon as possible what measures the Persian Government propose to take to clear His Majesty's Consulate of the large number of persons now in refuge there.

Inclosure 2 in No. 14.

Mr. E. Grant Duff to the Grand Vizier.

(Translation.)

June 14, 1906.

ALTHOUGH five days have passed since over 300 Persian subjects invaded His Majesty's Consulate at Shiraz, no steps apparently have been taken by your Highness to restore order in that town.

In accordance with the request of the Persian Government, Mr. Grahame announced to the people in "bast" at the Consulate that the Ala-ed-Dowleh had been appointed Governor-General of Fars. In spite of every effort on the part of Mr. Grahame to quiet the prevailing excitement, the people refuse to leave His Majesty's Consulate, and have addressed to Mr. Grahame a written communication, stating that until they receive a promise backed by assurances from His Majesty's Legation that their grievances will be redressed they decline to leave the protection of the British flag.

It must, I am confident, be clear to your Highness that the Persian Government cannot continue to refuse to take steps to restore order in Shiraz, and I await a reply to the notes I have had the honour to address both to your Highness and to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh on the subject, in order that I may inform His Majesty's Government of the measures you propose to take to put an end to a state of affairs which is causing serious damage to British interests.

Inclosure 3 in No. 14.

Mr. E. Grant Duff to Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

June 11, 1906.

HIS Majesty's Consul at Shiraz reports that the Imam Juma of that town called on him yesterday and requested that your Highness might be informed that, in compliance with your instructions, he harangued the Shiraz merchants for three hours, but they absolutely refused to leave His Majesty's Consulate until the Persian Government gives a written assurance to His Majesty's Legation that the various grievances in Fars be fully redressed. The Imam Juma warned Mr. Grahame that if the present agitation continues and becomes known in the outlying districts of Fars the situation may become very grave.

I hear also from a reliable source that the recent arrest of the Kavam-ul-Mulk has greatly aggravated the situation.

The presence of hundreds of Persian subjects at His Majesty's Consulate is extremely inconvenient, and I have the honour to request that your Highness will take adequate measures to restore order and protect British interests at Shiraz, which are compromised by the anarchy which has now prevailed for nearly a year.



[23144]

No. 15.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)*

(No. 164.)

Sir,

*Gulahak, June 20, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch addressed to the Government of India by His Majesty's Consul in Seistan on the subject of Russian complicity in the recent riots in Nasratabad.

Captain Macpherson, while admitting the great difficulty of obtaining direct evidence of Russian complicity, shows that a number of independent incidents and facts point to the conclusion that the Russian Consulate were mainly responsible for the riot. The circumstantial evidence available is as follows:—

1. The presence of well-known Russian agents at the riot and their activity in inciting the crowd.
2. The attitude of the Russian Consul in denouncing, as concerned in the disturbance, certain Persian officials known to be friendly to British interests.
3. The advent in Nasratabad of a number of villagers from Bunjar under a man notoriously under Russian influence. These villagers have no grievance, but are Russophil, and were concerned in the anti-English riot of 1903.
4. The statement of the Deputy-Governor that the Russians instigated the riot.
5. The evidence given by a number of witnesses examined by Captain MacPherson.
6. The manner in which the general sequence of events coincided with the furtherance of Russian interests.

I may say here that, at the request of Captain Macpherson, I did what I could to prevent the withdrawal of Malik-ul-Hukuma, but the Mushir-ed-Dowleh stated that information quite unconnected with complaints either from the Russians or the Customs had come to the knowledge of the Central Government, and they must insist on their right to remove their own officers. In the face of this statement it was clearly impossible for me to pursue the subject.

It appears to me that His Majesty's Consul in Seistan makes out a strong case against the Russians, and the tactics employed bear a strong resemblance to those frequently made use of in the past by Russian agents in Persia.

It is, however, difficult for me to believe that if the Russian Consul in Seistan instigated the riot he was instructed to do so from Tehran. M. de Somow, who was then Russian Chargé d'Affaires, is a quiet gentlemanlike man. I have always found him friendly and straightforward, and I should be surprised to see proof that he had been concerned during an outbreak of plague in fomenting a discreditable and rather useless disturbance, which, owing to the consequent breakdown of the quarantine arrangements, has probably caused hundreds of deaths. Russian agents in Persia are, however, given a very free hand, and if, as one is led to suppose, the Russian Consul in Nasratabad is an unscrupulous man, it is quite conceivable that he hoped to make political capital out of a riot similar to that of 1903.

The Russian Legation here has for some time been keeping quiet, and is just now more interested in affairs in Russia than in Persian politics.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure 1 in No. 15.

*Consul Macpherson to Government of India.*

Sir,

*Seistan, May 28, 1906.*

WITH reference to your telegram dated the 7th May, 1906, I have the honour to report as follows:—

My opinion as regards the complicity of the Russians in the riots of the 27th March, and in the subsequent demonstrations by the Bunjaris, &c., is still substantially that expressed by me in my letter to the Government of India of the 2nd April, that is to say, I am of opinion that they fermented the feeling of unrest which had been excited in the city and in the neighbouring villages by the advent of plague and by the introduction of anti-plague measures, and attempted to induce the people to resist those measures; that their object in so doing was primarily to lessen our influence

and deprive us of the virtual control of the anti-plague measures, which, previous to the disturbances, bade fair to pass into our hands.

I am not prepared to say that, had the Russians held altogether aloof, the feeling of unrest then existing would have found no expression. As has been proved time and time again in India, an outbreak of plague in a district which has not previously been subjected to its ravages frequently results in agitations and disturbances, and more especially so when any attempt is made to cope with the disease. Moreover, in the present instance, the man in whom the control of the anti-plague measures is vested is one conspicuous for lack of tact, and this defect, when dealing with an emergency which, above all, demands that quality, is in itself almost fatal.

The feeling of unrest might, indeed, have found some expression, but I am convinced that it would never have taken the direction, nor expanded to the dimensions which it eventually did, nor would it, I feel assured, have had the ultimate unfortunate result of indefinitely suspending active anti-plague measures, and so directly causing the deaths of probably some hundreds of persons, had not the Russians seized the opportunity of fanning the flame and poisoning the minds of the people through the medium of their agents.

Having thus expressed my opinion in general terms, I propose to examine more closely the evidence available, but, before doing so, would draw attention to the attitude of the Russians immediately subsequent to the first disturbance. As I have already reported (*vide* my letter of the 29th March), I met the Russian Consul and the Director of Customs an hour or so after the burning of the plague huts; they then, in my presence, laid the blame entirely at the door of the Malik-ul-Hukuma and the Persian Telegraph Master. The former had only arrived a few days previously, and it appeared that the Russian Consul was ostensibly so convinced of his complicity that he had actually threatened to arrest him. Now, this man had expressed himself in favour of the anti-plague measures advocated by us, had had himself publicly inoculated by Captain Kelly, and, so far as could be judged, was acting in perfect good faith (*vide* my letter dispatched to you under cover of letter of the 10th April, 1906). Why, then, was the Russian Consul so antagonistic to him in particular, since such antagonism practically spelt opposition to the anti-plague measures? To me the answer seems, and seemed, obvious. It should be recollected that the primary object of the Russians was to keep every vestige of control of the anti-plague measures out of our hands. As is abundantly clear from my diaries, M. Molitor, while here, had availed himself of our experience in plague work, and had frequently acted on our advice, and we had thereby acquired a certain influence among the people in all matters relating to the suppression of plague. After M. Molitor's departure an opportunity of undermining that influence presented itself to the Russians. In order to do so it was obviously necessary to hinder its further growth, and this could best be effected by, firstly, exciting the people against the plague measures; secondly, by weakening any factors in the situation which tended to promote those measures, and through which a settlement might finally be effected, and, thirdly, by fanning the agitation in order to prevent its too abrupt extinction, and possible consequent resumption of anti-plague measures.

The burning of the plague huts sufficiently demonstrates that the Russians had effected their first object. Their second, and scarcely less important, could best be attained by discrediting the man whose influence might yet quiet the people and restore the original *status quo*. I would lay great stress on the fact that there was no evidence against the Malik-ul-Hukuma; his attitude since his arrival in Seistan had been, as I have already stated, entirely in favour of the anti-plague measures. I myself heard the Russian Consul denounce him as the principal instigator of the disturbances, and also heard such reasons as he had to adduce. These were obviously quite insufficient, and were merely intended to lend colour to his statements.

The attitude adopted by the Russian Consul in this matter increased the suspicions which had been aroused in my mind by the presence among the rioters of several persons notorious as Russian agents. This latter point will be dealt with in detail later, when sifting such evidence as is available. It will, I think, however, be admitted that my suspicions, even at this early stage, were justified by the extraordinary manner in which the general sequence of events and the attitude of the Russians coincided in following their interests. But these strange coincidences did not end here. As I have said, it was obviously necessary (from the point of view of one opposed to the plague measures) to keep the agitation alive for some short period in order to effectually extinguish any possibility which might have existed of the people recognizing in time that they were, in effect, acting contrary to their own interests.

On the 29th March a large number of men came in from the village of Bunjar, some 5 miles distant from the city, carrying flags, &c., and with the obvious intention of creating a disturbance (*vide* my despatch of the 29th March). I have already given details of this occurrence, but would here lay emphasis on the fact that this village is, probably to a degree much greater than any other, Russophil.

I would call attention to several points, which seem to me in themselves to very clearly indicate Russian instigation, and which, when viewed in the light of previous incidents already commented on, leave no reasonable doubt in my mind.

Bunjar is a village which for some time past has been much under Russian influence. In this connection I would refer you to Mr. Dobbs' letter, dated the 7th July, 1903, on the subject of the grain riots. On that occasion it was practically proved that the Russians, wishing to arouse an anti-British agitation, used the Bunjaris as their tools. The chief agitator was then one Saiyad Hussein (*vide* p. 12 of Mr. Dobbs' letter), and it is to be inferred that this man was the principal instrument in the hands of the Russians in stirring up that agitation. That incident occurred less than three years ago. To-day, again, the Bunjaris, under the leadership of Saiyad Hussein, create an agitation against the British, and that, moreover, at a moment most opportune from the Russian point of view, most unfortunate from our own. But, it may be argued, it is possible that the Bunjaris, on this occasion at all events, had real grievances of their own altogether disconnected from Russian intrigue.

It is difficult to see how this can be the case. From my letter dated the 29th March, it will be seen that such grievances as were brought to our notice had no connection with the Bunjaris themselves; and, moreover, no anti-plague measures had been undertaken in Bunjar; why, then, should they, of all people, champion the cause of others?

However this may be, it is certain that this incident, combined with the withdrawal shortly afterwards of the Malik-ul-Hukuma (on the strength of, there can be little doubt, complaints made by the Russians and Customs), gave the death-blow to any hopes in which we may have indulged that a resumption of active anti-plague measures might yet be possible at a near date.

I will now revert to the first day of the disturbances, and review the direct evidence available.

In the attack on the plague huts and dispensary, two Russian agents, namely, (1) Haji Khorashadi and (2) Hassan Khorashadi, were present (*vide* statements of Mahomad Ali and Rahmat Ali, Inclosures Nos. 2 and 3). Of these two, Hassan Khorashadi appears to be a man of minor importance, but it is otherwise with Haji Khorashadi, a short history of whom is appended to this letter (*vide* Inclosure No. 4). The Deputy Governor has himself admitted that this man was present (*vide* Inclosure No. 5). Haji Khorashadi is not such an important personage as Mullah Mahomad Taki and Mullah Mahomad Hussain (which will be dealt with later), but he is well known as a Russian agent, and his presence in the actual disturbance is difficult to account for unless the Russians had a hand in it.

It should be remembered that agents such as these can always, as long as they remain such, be controlled, since their interests are closely involved with the side they are serving.

As regards the Bunjar incident, a reference to Mr. Dobbs' letter, dated the 7th July, 1903, will show that Saiyad Hussain was the chief agitator in an agitation which, as a perusal of that letter will show, almost certainly owed its origin to Russian instigation. There can be little doubt that Saiyad Hussain was the man who again induced the Bunjaris to make the disturbance on the 29th March (*vide* my letter of the 29th March). Independent inquiries show that he accompanied the crowd which was finally induced to return by the Mustafi (*vide* Inclosures Nos. 6 and 7). It will be observed that one of these statements, that of Kerbelai Mahomad Hussain, was taken on the 28th March, *i.e.*, one day prior to the actual incident. From this it appears that Saiyad Hussain had intended to bring the Bunjaris on the 28th March, but was prevented by the Deputy Governor.

My opinion regarding the complicity of the Russians was strengthened by the fact that nearly all the witnesses whom I had an opportunity of examining stated that Mullah Mahomad Taki and his brother, Mullah Mahomad Hussein, were the chief instigators (*vide* statements, Inclosures Nos. 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11). These men are Russian agents, and it is most improbable that they would take an important step of this nature except with the full cognizance of their virtual masters. Moreover, although Mullah Mahomad Taki, who from the evidence appears to be the chief ringleader, was not actually present at the disturbance at the dispensary, it was he who collected the crowd,

and Mr. Cattersell has informed me that he accompanied that section of it which branched off on the day of the disturbances to the customs-house in order to protest to the Director of Customs (*vide* Hospital Assistant Sheikh Ahmad's statement, forwarded to you with my letter of the 29th March, 1906). Further, the Director of Customs has informed me that Mullah Mahomad Taki stated before him that all attempts to disinfect houses, &c., would be forcibly resisted. Not only did this man take a leading, if not the principal, part in exciting the people of Husseinabad, but it may be inferred that he was responsible also for the disturbances which threatened from the direction of Daudi and Chilling (*vide* paragraph 5 of my letter dated the 31st March, 1906), as it was Mullah Ibrahim, a brother of Mullah Mahomad Taki, who led the contingent which actually started to come in from that place, and was only dissuaded from doing so by the efforts of the Rukn-ush-Shariah. Similarly, in the case of Mullah Mahomad Hussain, the brother of Mullah Mahomad Taki, a consensus of opinion tends to show that he also was implicated, and the same arguments would also apply in his case. It is impossible that these men could have been so much to the fore in the disturbances, unless it were with the cognizance and approval of the Russians.

When dealing with intrigues of this nature, and in a foreign country, it is of course almost impossible to obtain direct and conclusive evidence, and conclusions must be based at the best on such circumstantial evidence as may be available. In the present instance, a number of independent incidents lead us to the same conclusion, and these I now propose to briefly recapitulate:—

Firstly, the presence of Russian agents at the disturbance and the active rôle played by them in inciting the crowd. The fact that such evidence as is available tends to show that Mullah Mahomad Taki and other notorious Russian agents were the virtual ringleaders.

Secondly, the attitude adopted by the Russian Consul on the outbreak of the disturbances in denouncing the Malik-ul-Hukuma and the Persian Telegraph Master (*vide* paragraph 6 of my letter dated the 29th March) as responsible for the disturbances, despite the absence of all proof, and the strong presumption that the Malik-ul-Hukuma was acting in good faith (which was afforded by his willingness to be publicly inoculated and to give us all the assistance in his power).

Thirdly, the Bunjar incident, which, it appears to me, can only be explained by the supposition that the Russians were anxious to keep alive the disturbances, since the Bunjaris, who had no grievances of their own, were led by a man notoriously under Russian influence, and since, in the absence of any other motive, it seems reasonable to conclude that the same influence has been brought to bear on them as in the time of Mr. Dobbs.

Fourthly, the difficulty of believing that such an extraordinary series of coincidences as has been exhibited to us by a number of untoward events, each helping the Russians towards the attainment of their object, could have a spontaneous origin, a difficulty which is accentuated by the attitude of the Russians themselves, which has made it abundantly evident that they are straining every nerve in order to compass that object.

On the other hand, the only arguments which, it appears to me, might be adduced with any show of reason as tending to prove either that the disturbances were nothing more than the natural outcome of the feeling of unrest engendered by the anti-plague measures, or were not, at any rate, aggravated by any action on the part of the Russians, are as follows:—

Firstly, the improbability inherent in the argument that they would ferment a disturbance which might react on themselves, the more so since their doctor has been suspected of acting in a somewhat tactless manner (*vide* supplement to Seistan Diary No. 11, for period the 19th to 25th March), and the additional unlikelihood of such action in view of the fact that the Russians are as capable as ourselves of realizing that disturbances in a thickly populated area, once set on foot, cannot be controlled, and, in any case, are very liable to involve their promoters in unexpected complications.

To this I would reply that the disturbances were entirely local in character, and would not be likely to spread beyond those persons who were actually concerned in the anti-plague measures, and that the Russians, by following the line of action which I have given it as my opinion that they did follow, diverted animosity from themselves, the more so since they were taking practically no active part in the actual anti-plague measures.

Secondly, since suspicions have been expressed by me that the Deputy Governor and the Mustafi were themselves the prime instigators (*vide* Diary No. 13, for the



7th April), it may be argued that I thereby practically admitted the weakness of my expressed convictions regarding the part played by the Russians. But this argument will not bear close scrutiny.

The statement of the Rukn-ush-Shariah, who is a man of considerable importance, and of other witnesses, combined with the fact that the motive was so apparent, and that great supineness was afterwards displayed when the question of punishment arose, did, indeed, lead me to conclude that the Deputy Governor and Mustaufi might very probably have themselves worked up the disturbances. Moreover, the fact that Sheikh Raza, the leading Mujtahid in Husseinabad, and also Mullah Mahomad Hussein, of Neh, were among the ringleaders, although no connection has been definitely established between them and the Russians, would seem to indicate that other influences were at work. To this opinion I still adhere.

The antipathy which seems to exist universally in Persia between the Customs and civil authorities had been in this instance accentuated by the action of M. Molitor (*vide* Diary, the 7th February), and, in particular, by the jealousy aroused owing to the power given to the Customs to take over grain for quarantine purposes.

In this connection I would observe that, when stating the case against the Russians, I omitted to call attention to a statement made by the Deputy Governor to my head clerk, which was to the effect that, in the opinion of the former, the Russians had instigated the riots. This omission was due to the suspicion with which I could not but receive such an avowal from an individual probably interested in screening his own actions.

It seems to me, however, that the probable complicity of the Deputy Governor and Mustaufi in no way affects the case against the Russians, though it may, indeed, render intelligible the circumstance that the hostility displayed during the disturbances was primarily directed against the Customs.

It is obvious that disaffection, once set on foot, no matter by whom, can be taken advantage of by other persons who may happen to find it to their interests and have materials for so doing ready at hand. In other words, it is highly probable that a certain amount of unrest had been caused among the people by the plague, &c., that they were incited to resist the Customs by the Deputy Governor and Mustaufi, who bore them a grudge, and that the Russians, finding the ground ready prepared for them, took advantage of the situation in order to undermine our influence.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. D. MACPHERSON, Captain,  
His Britannic Majesty's Consul for Seistan and Kain.

#### Inclosure 2 in No. 15.

##### *Statement of Mahomad Ali, Servant of Ram Dass.*

THE people had made up their minds to make a demonstration against the Belgians about eight days before the actual riot; the people were annoyed because the Belgians burnt their houses and examined their sick.

The ringleaders of the disturbance were the following:—

1. Mullah Mahomad Taki.
2. Mullah Mahomad Hussain (brother of 1).
3. Mullah Abas.
4. Mahomad Hussain, of Neh.
5. Various others of minor importance.

The following attacked the hospital:—

1. Haji Khorashadi.
2. Mahomad Hussain and others.

Since Russian Consulate has been closed Mullah Mahomad Taki has been constantly going in and out. Mullah Mehdi has had no hand in the disturbances, but Sheikh Raza undoubtedly countenanced them.

Mullah Abas is a Russian news-writer.

The people had grievances against the Belgians, but they have also been excited by many of the Russian agents, who seem to be anxious to stir them up.

April 17, 1906.

#### Inclosure 3 in No. 15.

##### *Statement of Rahmat Ali.*

I RECOGNIZED (1) Haji Khorashadi and (2) Hassan Khorashadi at the disturbance yesterday. The former was the man who was exciting the crowd, and who threatened the British Consul. Gbulam, of Husseinabad, was the first to set fire to the plague huts.

It is generally rumoured that the Russians have been egging the people on, and both Mirza Mahomad Hussain and Ali Akbar, Tufangdar, informed me to that effect.

A large crowd of Seistanis went to Mullah Mehdi this afternoon and complained that Sultan Mahomad, the British trader, had given religious abuse yesterday, and stated that they intended to pay him out when he opened his shop. Mullah Mehdi told them not to make fools of themselves. He pointed out that the Russian Mirza was at the bottom of all the mischief that had occurred, but that the people and the Mullahs would probably suffer for it.

Mullah Mahomad Taki was the spokesman of the crowd which went to Mullah Mehdi, and most of the persons who created the disturbance were present. It is commonly said that the following, among others, are the real ringleaders of the disturbance:—

1. Mullah Mahomad Taki.
2. Mullah Mahomad Hussein (brother of 1).
3. Mahomad Hussein, of Neh.

Nos. 1 and 2 are well-known traders and Russian agents.

March 28, 1906.

#### Inclosure 4 in No. 15.

##### *Relations of Mullah Mahomad Taki, Mullah Mahomad Hussain, and Haji Khorashadi with the Russians.*

ABOUT two years ago Mullah Mahomad Taki took 1,000 tomans' worth of merchandize from Abdul Karim, who was then the Russian Bank agent in Seistan. Of this sum 600 tomans was subsequently repaid. When M. Nekrassof, the present Russian Consul, arrived about nine months ago, he advanced him another 800 tomans. This sum was taken up jointly by Mullah Mahomad Taki, Mullah Mahomad Hussain, brother of the former, and Haji Khorashadi; their respective shares being, 300 tomans, 250 tomans, 250 tomans. An agreement was taken from them at the same time that they would only trade with the Russian Bank, and should pay interest on the loan at the rate of 1 per cent. per mensem. In return for the above the bank agreed to sell merchandize to Mullah Mahomad Taki at 10 per cent. discount on the actual cash price and to the other two men at 5 per cent. discount.

At the time of the riot Mullah Mahomad Taki owed the bank about 700 tomans, and the other men each 250 tomans. Early in May the above three men delivered over to the bank skins and carpets of an estimated value of, approximately, 250 tomans in part satisfaction of their debt (*vide* Diary for 30th April, 1906).

In addition to the above debts, Mullah Mahomad Taki owes a great deal of money to the people of Husseinabad and other traders in Seistan; he is also said to owe about 5-10 s. to Mullah Abas, the Russian Bank agent in Meshed.

The reason of his great intimacy with the Russians is due to the fact that he is absolutely in their hands, and fears that if he displeases them they may ruin him. His following amongst the Husseinabadis has greatly diminished during the past few weeks, as the people now realize that he is playing entirely for his own hand.

## Inclosure 5 in No. 15.

*List of Rioters admitted by the Deputy Governor to have been involved in the disturbances at the Hospital.*

- |                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Haji Khorashadi.   | 5. Saiyad Raza, Chilingi.   |
| 2. Hassan Khorashadi. | 6. Darweshi Abdur Rahim.    |
| 3. Ali Beg, Jazari.   | 7. Saiyad Teherani.         |
| 4. Saiyad Mahomad.    | 8. Mahomad Hussein, of Neh. |

## Inclosure 6 in No. 15.

*Statement of Kerbelai Mahomad Hussein, son of Mahomad of Banjar.*

CERTAIN Banjaris yesterday, returning to Banjar from the city, brought back word that the people of Banjar were to be in readiness to proceed to the city this morning if summoned.

About 1,000 people collected under the instigation of Saiyad Hussein, and determined to comply with the request. About midnight, however, a message was received from the Deputy Governor warning the Banjaris not to move from the village. Had it not been for this, it is certain the Banjaris would have come in this morning (the 28th March).

Mullah Mahomad Taki has been exciting the Banjaris a good deal lately.

Saiyad Hussein is a Russian agent, and is the man who gave trouble in 1903 during the grain riots.

Certain other Banjaris also excited the people, viz.:—

1. Kerbelai Saiyad Ibrahim;
2. Hussein, son of Akbar;
3. Meshedi Ali Akbar, son of Mahomad Ali;

and others, but Saiyad Hussain played the chief part.

The people were annoyed against the English because it was said that they gave medicine to them with the intention of killing them.

March 28, 1906.

## Inclosure 7 in No. 15.

*Statement of Saiyad Ibrahim.*

ABOUT eight or nine days after the disturbance, the Russian Mirza visited Banjar on his way to Iskil. He was exciting the people by telling them that the British had brought 500 camels with sowars into Nasratabad, and that they meant to shoot the people; he asked them tauntingly whether they were all women, and were going to allow their women to be dishonoured, &c., without retaliating. The Mirza acted through his newswriters, Ali Jan, Mullah Ibrahim, and their relations.

There is reason to believe that Sheikh Raza wrote a letter to the Banjaris on the 27th March with the object of exciting them.

On the 27th a verbal message was received from Mullah Mahomad Taki with the same object.

The following people from Banjar came in with the crowd on the 29th March:—

1. Saiyad Hussain;
2. Ghulam Hussain, son of Ali Akbar;
3. Kerbelai Ali;

and also various others. The night previous to the arrival of the Banjaris Saiyad Hussain and one or two others were going about and telling the people to collect, but nothing came of it.

April 25, 1906.

## Inclosure 8 in No. 15.

*Statement of Ghulam Raza, Servant to Mr. Macmanus.*

THE following persons in the city are the chief among the instigators.—

1. Mullah Mahomad Taki;
2. Mullah Mahomad Hussain (brother of No. 1);
3. Haji Khorashadi;
5. Kerbelai Haidar;

and others of less influence.

The people were easily excited by statements regarding the examination of patients, &c., and the movement was first directed against the British, as it was pointed out that their doctors went about amongst them more than the others. Later on, it occurred to them that the Belgians were the real offenders, as they controlled the anti-plague measures.

Nos. 1, 2, and 3, mentioned above, are all well-known Russian agents.

March 28, 1906.

## Inclosure 9 in No. 15.

*Statement of Mahomad Akram, Kat Khuda of Deh Isa.*

ON the night previous to the riot Mullah Mahomad Taki, Mullah Abas, and Mullah Mahomad Hussain held a meeting in the "Ark," at the house of Mir Mahomad Sultan. When the above men were returning, about six hours after sunset, I met them and asked them what they had been doing; they merely replied that they had been discussing some business.

I know that previous to the riot Mirza Asadulla, Russian head clerk, Meshedi Raza, and Mullah Mahomad Taki were frequently meeting and consulting with one another.

When the party from Banjar arrived I was sent by Mullah Mehdi to stop them, but they would not listen to me, and a number of them came right up to the city. The Mustaufi and a man sent by the Deputy Governor arrived shortly afterwards; the crowd threatened the latter with sticks, and a few stones were also thrown at him.

The Mustaufi did not seem to be really anxious to disperse the crowd; on the contrary, it seemed to me that he was urging them on. Mullah Mahomad Hussain is a friend of the Mustaufi's; Mahomad Hussain, of Neh, is also one of the principal ringleaders. I recognized the following among the Banjar crowd:—

1. Kerbelai Saiyad Mahomad,
2. Saiyad Raza, Birjandi,

and also various others of minor importance.

April 9, 1906.

## Inclosure 10 in No. 15.

*Statement of Ismail, Persian Chuprassie, in Consulate employ.*

I CARRIED the letter from the Deputy Governor to his Naib (Mirza Mahomad Hussain); Fakira accompanied me. When I handed the letter to the Naib he became very angry with his servants, and cursed them for not obeying his orders. He said the Deputy Governor had now sent him an order to put an end to the disturbance.

He then gave instructions to a "vakil," who was present, to go immediately and bring Mullah Mahomad Taki, Katkhuda Abas, and another Katkhuda whose name I do not remember. After this we all left the premises together, the "vakil" accompanying us, and when we arrived opposite the caravanserai Fakira and I turned into it and the "vakil" went on to Husseinabad to fulfil his errand.

*Note.*—The above evidence should be read in conjunction with that of Fakira (Inclosure No. 11). Both these statements show what action was taken by the Naib, [1660]



and that action seems significant, as it would appear that he was well aware who the ringleaders were. His action in immediately summoning them is otherwise incomprehensible.

Inclosure 11 in No. 15.

*Statement of Fakira.*

I WAS with Ismail when he took the letter to the Naib. The latter ordered two of his farrashes to go immediately and bring the following persons to him:—

1. Mullah Abas.
2. Mullah Mahomad Taki.
3. Katkhuda Abas.
4. Katkhuda Dad Khuda.

One of the farrashes left with us and accompanied us as far the caravanserai; he was called "Yakil."

The Naib first of all ordered another man to fetch the above-mentioned men, but he refused and said there would probably be more trouble. The Naib was furious with him for not obeying his orders.

*Note.*—This statement should be read in conjunction with Ismail's statement (Inclosure No. 10).

[23146]

No. 16.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)*

(No. 166.)  
Sir,

*Gulahek, June 21, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith the Monthly Summary of Events in Persia, which have not been recorded in separate despatches.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure 1 in No. 16.

*Monthly Summary of Events in Persia.*

*Meshed.*

MAJOR KENNION arrived in Meshed, and took over the duties of Consul-General on the 16th May. He was given official receptions at Sabzawar and Nishapur as well as at Meshed, where a representative of the Russian Consulate-General was among those who received him.

2. A Russian officer named Sakharoff is at present travelling from Shahrud to Kerman and Beluchistan. This is not the same officer as that mentioned in last month's summary as travelling in the neighbourhood of Astrabad.

3. The appointment of Captain Iyass as Russian Consul at Turbat-i-Haideri has been officially confirmed.

4. With reference to Consul Steven's despatch No. 5 of the 21st March, reporting the receptions given in Batoun and Baku to a certain Sirdar Din Mahomed Khan, who represented himself as a brother of the Amcer of Afghanistan, it appears that the so-called Sirdar is in reality a low-class refugee, who was originally a dancing boy in the soldiers' lines at Herat; thence he fled to Meshed, where he led a disreputable life, and, after having several times been seized and flogged, went to Kushan, and has since led the life of an adventurer. His real name is Juma.

5. Two French officers, Commandant Lacoste and Captain Enselme, who recently passed through Tehran, arrived in Meshed on the 11th May, and left there for Russian Central Asia. They intend to go from there to India.

6. Numerous complaints are received at Meshed regarding the methods of the quarantine officials on the roads thence to Seistan. The Russian doctor at Karez insisted on keeping in quarantine for ten days a caravan which had arrived from Bunder Abbas, though they had already mixed freely with the people of the neighbouring villages, and on another occasion he detained a party who had already done quarantine at Bandan. In consequence of the delays caused by these methods, no camel men in Meshed will now take goods for India.

7. There has been much correspondence of late regarding the site for a new customs-house in Meshed, there being an intrigue in influential quarters to have it erected in the open space close to our Consulate-General, in spite of the fact that this site would be extremely inconvenient for all the business community. The question is of considerable importance to our Consulate-General, as the construction of the customs-house close outside the gates would completely spoil that portion of the town, which is now comparatively open and healthy, and His Majesty's Legation have consequently addressed the Persian Government on the subject. The Governor-General has been supporting the view taken by our Consulate, but it is now reported that his reason for doing so is that he wishes to build three caravanserais on the site in question.

8. His Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed asserts that the Russian Bank constantly imports arms and ammunition for sale in Persia, and that these goods pass through the customs-house without examination. Recently eight boxes arrived for Captain Scouratt, the Military Attaché, which on being opened were seen to contain nine rifles and twelve revolvers.

9. It is reported in Meshed that four influential men in Tehran, including the Prime Minister, are trying to form a Company to repair the Meshed-Tehran road, and render it fit for motor traffic.

*Turbat-i-Haideri.*

Plague being reported at Jangal, about 40 miles south of Turbat on the road to Birjand, Captain Watson was sent to investigate it, and found the village infected. By order of the Governor-General of Meshed, troops were put at his disposal, and the Deputy-Governor of Turbat superintended the placing of a cordon round the village.

*Seistan.*

1. Various cases are reported from Seistan in which Indian traders and Consulate employés have been insulted or assaulted, and so far no steps have been taken to punish the ringleaders in the riots of March last. At the instance of His Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed, the Asaf-ed-Dowleh has sent an agent to Seistan to inquire into and try and settle the matter. He left Meshed on the 10th May.

2. The Itisham-ul-Wazara has been recalled to Tehran and left Seistan on the 24th April.

3. Early in May, information was received in Seistan that an Afghan caravan with 1,000 rifles was on its way through Persia, via Nusretabad, Sipi, and Girdi Chah, to Afghanistan. M. Cattersel was at once warned, and on the matter being reported to Tehran, His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at once brought the matter to the notice of the Mushir-ed-Dowleh and M. Naus. No steps, however, were taken to intercept the caravan, and news has recently been received that it crossed the frontier unmolested, escorted by about 80 Afghans.

4. Almost the entire village of Jazinak has been carried away by floods, and much damage has been done to crops in the neighbourhood.

5. Owing to plague, most of the shops in Seistan have closed, and the owners have in many cases left the district. Altogether, trade prospects for the coming year are very gloomy, and many consignments of goods ordered have been stopped at Quetta.

*Kerman.*

1. The Russian Consul, M. Adamoff, arrived in Kerman on the 22nd May, and was given the usual official reception.

2. About 40 camel loads of wool arrived in Kerman from Seistan, but the

Governor would not allow them to be unpacked, and the owners were given the option of leaving them to be opened after six months, or taking them away again. They chose the latter course.

#### Yezd.

A disturbance was lately threatened at Yezd owing to Messrs. Ziegler's agent there having struck a boy who jeered at him in the bazaar, and inflicted a slight wound on his head. The matter was settled locally by the Governor, who agreed that a small sum should be paid to the boy's father as compensation, but the Mollahs interfered and reported the matter to Tehran, where it formed the subject of an official complaint to His Majesty's *Chargé d'Affaires*. It has now been decided that the agent is to be removed from Yezd.

#### Bushire.

1. Some time ago a French doctor of the name of Bussière was engaged by the Customs authorities in Bushire as their medical officer, but he has not given complete satisfaction, and they are now talking of dispensing with his further services. The Director-General of Customs has approached Captain Condon, the Residency Surgeon, with a view to ascertaining whether in that case he would be willing to undertake the medical attendance of the Customs staff at a yearly salary of 3,000 fr. or perhaps 4,000 fr. Captain Condon has informed him that personally he is quite willing to accept the appointment on the terms mentioned, and His Majesty's Resident at Bushire has recommended that should the offer be definitely renewed he should be permitted to accept it.

2. The arms referred to in Foreign Office despatch No. 56 of the 18th April were landed at Bushire on the 24th May, whence they were taken by the Persian ship "Persepolis" to Mohammerah, and landed there on the 12th June. The consignment consisted of 2,162 cases of arms and ammunition and 20 mountain guns. His Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah has been asked to try and obtain further information regarding them, and to inform the Legation to what place they are consigned. They are the property of the Persian Government.

#### Ahwaz.

1. A fresh disturbance is reported among the Beni Truf Arabs at Hawuzeh, where a Chief named Sabhan, who has been in exile since the operations of last year, suddenly appeared and seized the place, after killing three and wounding eight of the Persian garrison. He was afterwards driven out by a force collected by Sheikh Khazal.

2. M. Miller, assistant to the Russian Consul-General at Bushire, visited Ahwaz and Shuster in March last.

#### Shiraz.

There is no improvement in the situation in Fars, and recent events there form the subject of a separate despatch. Vazir Makhsus, the ex-High Commissioner, has left Shiraz.

#### Isfahan.

His Imperial Highness the Zil-es-Sultan now ascribes the recent bread riot to Russian intrigues. His reason appears to be that Prince Dabija recently sent him a package containing specimens of bread bought in the bazaar, with a letter drawing attention to its inferior quality. His Highness, however, opened the parcel first under the impression that it was a present, and was much disgusted at its contents.

#### Kermanshah.

The Persian Company, which has a concession for a road from Hamadan to Kasr-i-Shirin, is now reported to have commenced work at the Hamadan end.

#### Tabreez.

The Persian Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Turco-Persian frontier dispute passed through Tabreez on their way to the frontier at the end of last month. On the 1st June information was received that the house of a Turkish subject in Sujbulak had been attacked by Kurds and Persian soldiers, and the family all massacred, and on the 6th June the Turks were reported to have occupied the village of Arzaneh, within a few miles of Sujbulak. The Turkish Consul-General at Tabreez left a few days later to inquire into the case. Before leaving he informed Mr. Wratislaw confidentially that from a telegram he had received from Constantinople he inferred that the Turkish Government intended to make a forward move.

#### Tehran.

Zahir-ed-Dowleh, the Lord Chamberlain, has been ordered to proceed to Hamadan as Governor, on account of his having protected the Kawan-ul-Mulk, the great Fars landowner, who was recently arrested. Zahir-ed-Dowleh is Chief of the Dervishes.

The Shah proceeds to Sultanabad, near Gulahek, on the 24th instant.

Said-es-Saltaneh, late Minister of Police, has been expelled from Tehran for supposed complicity with the Mollahs.

A number of women not long ago collected at the gate of the Palace and grossly insulted the Grand Vizier, who was much annoyed by the incident.

Two Germans, named Ehrhardt and Eichborn, passed through Kermanshah early in May and were in Tehran at the end of that month, where they were the guests of the German *Chargé d'Affaires*. The former is a member of the firm of gunmakers of that name, and the latter is a cavalry officer. Mr. Grant Duff hears from a trustworthy source that M. Ehrhardt received a large order for arms and ammunition from the Bakhtiari Khans, which are to be surreptitiously imported across the frontier. M. Cesari of the Customs Department is stated to have been commissioned to intercept the consignment.

(Signed) J. A. DOUGLAS, *Lieutenant-Colonel,*  
*Military Attaché.*

#### Inclosure 2 in No. 16.

#### Matters dealt with in separate Despatches.

Persian Commercial Treaties .. .. .	Nos. 14, 15, and 17, Commercial.
British Agent at Lingah .. .. .	No. 154 of the 11th June.
British outstanding claims in Persia .. .. .	" 156 " 16th "
Henjam .. .. .	" 155 " 16th "
State of Seistan .. .. .	" 157 " 18th "
Condition of Persia .. .. .	" 158 " 18th "
Interest on British loan .. .. .	" 160 " 20th "
Russians on Seistan telegraph line .. .. .	" 161 " 20th "
Shiraz disturbances .. .. .	" 162 " 20th "
New Russian Minister .. .. .	" 165 " 20th "
Plague in Seistan .. .. .	Nos. 13 and 18, Commercial.
D'Arcy oil concession .. .. .	No. 163 of the 20th June.
Grain embargo .. .. .	No. 19, Commercial.
Russian intrigue in Seistan .. .. .	No. 164 of the 20th June.
Agitation in Tehran .. .. .	" 167 " 21st "
Shah's health .. .. .	" 168 " 21st "

[23147]

No. 17.

Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 167.)  
Sir,

Gulahek, June 21, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to report that the town of Tehran is in an unsatisfactory state, owing principally to the agitation of the chief Mollahs against the Grand Vizier and to the dearth of bread.

The two great Mujtahids, Seyyid Abdullah and Seyyid Mohamed, have been more than usually active lately, and have caused the Government much anxiety



by inflammatory sermons, delivered in the mosques to congregations often exceeding 3,000 persons. The hands of these Mujtahids have been greatly strengthened by the accession to their party of the Sheikh Fazlullah and the Imam Juma, who sided with the Government last winter when the bulk of the clergy took asylum at Shah Abdul Azim.

It was announced at the beginning of the month that the Mollahs had arranged a riot against the Government, but although nothing has as yet occurred, the town is patrolled at night by a strong force of Cossacks, and no Persian is allowed out after dark. Recently the emissaries of Seyyid Abdullah induced a number of women to collect at one of the gates of the Palace and grossly insult the Grand Vizier. The Atabeg was obliged somewhat precipitately to take refuge in the Palace precincts, which he could not leave all day. The gates then were closed, and the Palace guards reinforced.

Another significant sign of the times is the fact that the great preacher, Haji Sheikh-ul-Reis, one of the most enlightened men in Persia, has taken refuge at the Turkish Embassy, and to-day I hear that a considerable number of "tolabs" (religious students) have joined him. I am also informed that, in answer to a request from the Mushir-ed-Dowleh that the students should be forthwith turned out, Chemsuddin Bey, the Turkish Ambassador, replied that not only would such action be against the custom of the country, but that he had received orders from the Sultan to protect these persons.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh told me on Tuesday last that the Government were, under strong pressure from the Mollahs, seriously attempting to reform the administration of justice. It is difficult to believe, however, that any radical change can be introduced. The Ministers and principal officials are, almost without exception, men who can be bought with a few tomans, and the mere creation of courts, even if this is possible in such a country as Persia, would only serve to accentuate the existing evils.

Unless the Government conciliate the clerical party by fulfilling the promise given by the Shah in the winter there will in all probability be trouble here before many weeks have passed. What form the disturbances will take it is difficult to foresee, but I do not think the Europeans will in the first instance be molested. Of the safety of the Armenians I am by no means certain. I should not be surprised to hear any day that the Mollahs had taken "last" in a body in His Majesty's Legation in town.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[23148]

No. 18.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)*

(No. 168.)  
Sir,

*Gulahek, June 21, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to report that His Majesty the Shah is better, and can now walk slowly with the help of a stick. His Majesty is, however, very feeble, both in mind and body, and for the present has practically ceased to transact business, although he has signed a few documents.

Owing to rumours which have been recently current that His Majesty was dead, he has driven out on two or three occasions to show himself to the people. As at present arranged, the Shah will go next Sunday to Sultanabad, a Royal residence about a mile from Gulahek.

It is extremely difficult to obtain reliable information as to the exact state of His Majesty's health. His doctors declare that he is much better, and will soon be much the same as before his stroke. On the other hand, persons about the Court who see him every day state that he is greatly changed, being silent and pensive, whereas formerly he talked for hours with his attendants. On the whole, it would seem probable that His Majesty's mind, which was never strong, has become still further impaired, and that his bodily condition is unsatisfactory.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[23149]

No. 19.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)*

(No. 169.)  
Sir,

*Tehran, June 21, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a copy of an Agreement between the Persian Government and the Indo-European Telegraph Company, whereby the former declare that they have no objection to the Company coming to an arrangement with the British Government for taking over the Tehran-Khanikin telegraph line, which formed the subject of the Convention of the 23rd November, 1865, between the British and Persian Governments.

Should His Majesty's Government come to such an understanding with the Indo-European Telegraph Company, the conditions under which the said line is to be worked will be regulated by Convention between the Company and the Persian Government.

I am informed by the local Director of the Indo-European Telegraph Company that his Board have reason to believe that the German Government have designs on the Tehran-Khanikin line, and the inclosed Agreement has been made as a precaution.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

*Inclosure in No. 19.*

*Agreement between the Persian Government and Indo-European Telegraph Company.*

LE Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Schah n'a aucune objection à ce que l'Indo-European Telegraph Company s'entende avec le Gouvernement Britannique pour la reprise éventuelle de la section de Téhéran à la frontière Turque (Kanekine) de la ligne télégraphique qui fait l'objet de la Convention conclue le 23 Novembre, 1865, entre le Gouvernement Persan et le Gouvernement Britannique.

Dans le cas où la reprise serait effectuée, les conditions de l'exploitation de la dite section seront réglées par une Convention à conclure entre le Gouvernement Persan et l'Indo-European Telegraph Company.

*Ainsi fait en double expédition à Téhéran le 14 Juin, 1906.*

(L.S.) Seal of Atabeg-i-Azam.  
(L.S.) Seal of Mushir-ed-Dowleh.  
(L.S.) Seal of Russian Legation, certifying authenticity of seals of Atabeg-i-Azam and Mushir-ed-Dowleh.  
(Signed) A. BARANOVSKY.

[23150]

No. 20.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)*

(No. 170. Secret.)  
Sir,

*Gulahek, June 21, 1906.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 151 of the 6th instant, I have the honour to report that the Mushir-ed-Dowleh informed me verbally that he had reason to believe that the Grand Vizier and other persons at Court were conspiring, in case of the Shah's death, to place the Shua-es-Saltaneh on the throne. He earnestly begged that I would be most careful to whom I repeated what he had said. He added that the design would probably be unsuccessful, owing to the great unpopularity of the Grand Vizier and the few persons who may be said to form his party. He promised to keep me informed.

There is little doubt that the arrival of the Valiahd in Tehran would bring about the immediate downfall of both the Shua-es-Saltaneh and the Grand Vizier. The Heir Apparent is on bad terms with both these persons, and might even have them killed.

The Shah's health is unsatisfactory, as I have reported elsewhere, and his mind is feeble. It is not impossible that the Shua-es-Saltaneh, who is constantly with the Shah, might induce His Majesty to alter the succession in his favour.

It is unnecessary to say that it is important that it should not become known that the Mushir-ed-Dowleh has mentioned the alleged conspiracy to me.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[23151]

No. 21.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)*

(No. 171.)  
Sir,

*Gulahak, June 21, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to report that Saad-ed-Dowleh, late Minister of Commerce, who was not long ago exiled to Yezd on suspicion of being implicated in the Mollah movement in Tehran on the 2nd ultimo, took "bast" at the British Vice-Consulate at Yezd. I have been trying, up to the present in vain, to induce the Grand Vizier to allow his Excellency to proceed to Europe.

The Saad-ed-Dowleh was for some time Persian Minister at Brussels.

As the state of the country becomes worse, the number of the "bastees" will probably increase. There are at present two persons in "bast" at His Majesty's Legation at Tehran—over 300 at His Majesty's Consulate at Shiraz (see my despatch No. 162 of the 2nd instant)—the son of Kavam-ul-Mulk, at the Indo-European Telegraph Office at Abadeh; and the Saad-ed-Dowleh at Yezd.

The cases of none of these persons even remotely concern His Majesty's Legation, and at the same time, owing to the feeling in Persia on the subject of asylum, I cannot turn them out.

The custom thus gives endless trouble to His Majesty's Legation, and there have been cases in which "bastees" have remained for as long as nine years in our grounds.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[23153]

No. 22.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)*

(No. 173.)  
Sir,

*Gulhak, June 22, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of an Agreement come to on the 14th instant between the Indo-European Telegraph Company and the Persian Government whereby the Concession held by the Company is prolonged for twenty years. The Company pays 40,000*l.* down to the Persian Government. This advance will not begin to be repaid until 1912. Until then it will accumulate compound interest at 4 per cent. until all the debt owing by the Persian Government to the Company has been paid. After that the advance of 40,000*l.* will be liable to 5 per cent. simple interest.

In the Agreement there are also various conditions regarding the payment of telegrams sent over the Company's wire by the Persian Government and private persons.

You will observe that the inclosed Agreement and that regarding the Khanikin line (see my despatch No. 169 of the 21st instant) were both registered at the Russian Legation, which charged the Company 750 roubles for that service. The local Director of the Indo-European Telegraph Company informs me that when the Company first desired to commence operations in Persia, the then British Minister at Tehran entirely declined to assist them, hence the strange arrangement whereby a British Company is protected in Persia by the Russian Legation.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 22.

*Agreement between the Indo-European Telegraph Company and Persian Government.*

LA Compagnie de l'Indo-European Telegraph fait au Gouvernement Impérial Persan l'avance d'une somme de 40,000*l.* à valoir sur les redevances à partir de l'année 1912, conformément aux conditions suivantes :—

La dite avance sera productive d'un intérêt composé de 4 per cent jusqu'à complète liquidation des obligations actuelles, après quoi elle sera productive d'un intérêt simple de 5 per cent.

La Concession est prolongée pour une durée de 20 ans à partir de la date de l'expiration de la Concession actuelle.

Le prix des télégrammes transmis par la Compagnie par ordre de l'Administration des Télégraphes Persans pour compte de particuliers devra lui être soldé mensuellement, et au plus tard dix jours après la remise du compte mensuel, compte dont une copie devra être adressée au Premier Ministre. En cas de non-paiement à l'expiration de ce délai de dix jours, la Compagnie devra en aviser officiellement le Premier Ministre; et si deux mois après la date du dit avis le paiement en retard n'avait pas été effectué par l'Administration des Télégraphes Persans, la Compagnie aura le droit de percevoir dorénavant elle-même et pour toute la durée de la Concession, directement du public, le prix des télégrammes dans toutes les villes où elle possède des offices, sous la réserve toutefois que le Gouvernement aura toujours la faculté, quand il le jugera nécessaire, d'exercer son droit de censure sur tous les télégrammes, tant à la réception qu'à l'expédition.

En ce qui concerne les télégrammes Gouvernementaux remis à la Compagnie à Téhéran le compte en sera adressé tous les trois mois au Premier Ministre et le paiement devra obligatoirement en avoir lieu au plus tard trois mois après la date de la remise du compte trimestriel.

A défaut de paiement à l'expiration de ce délai de trois mois, la Compagnie aura le droit de percevoir elle-même directement les taxes dues pour les télégrammes présentés par le public et de retenir sur ces taxes la part finale revenant au Gouvernement Persan, jusqu'à ce que les frais des télégrammes Gouvernementaux soient complètement acquittés.

Fait en double expédition à Téhéran le 14 Juin, 1906.

L.S. Seal of Atabeg-i-Azam.

L.S. Seal of Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

L.S. Seal of Russian Legation, with guarantee of the authenticity of the seals of the Atabeg-i-Azam and the Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

(Signed) A. BARANOVSKY.

[23158]

No. 23.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)*

(No. 18. Commercial.)  
Sir,

*Gulahak, June 18, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to state that the plague is reported to be spreading in Seistan and has now reached the Afghan border.

Captain Kelly, who is attached to His Majesty's Consulate at Nasratabad, in a Report dated the 5th ultimo, states that, in spite of the steady spread of the disease from village to village, the Director of Customs obstinately adheres to his own ideas as regards the correct method of stamping it out. He occasionally asks the European doctors for suggestions, but apparently ignores their advice. His plan seems to consist in isolated and disconnected attempts at the forcible disinfection of houses. These measures serve no useful purpose, and increase the prevailing discontent. He is reported to receive little or no support from the local authorities.

As far as I can gather, the only satisfactory measure which has been taken is the inoculation of the common people by Captain Kelly, who on the 2nd ultimo reports that



only one person has died out of the 960 inoculated. Fortunately, the inhabitants are slowly beginning to appreciate the advantage of inoculation, and at the request of His Majesty's Acting Consul in Seistan I have applied to the Persian Government for the services of a native physician, who will, I hope, inspire confidence and greatly assist Captain Kelly in his work. In order as far as possible to avoid friction, I have asked the Mushir-ed-Dowleh to suggest to the Russian Minister the desirability of Dr. Zaplatinsky also having at his disposal the services of a native practitioner to assist in inoculation work.

For the weeks ending 5th May, 12th May, and 19th May the plague mortality at the capital of Seistan is given at forty-four, eighty-four, and sixty-eight respectively.

As I had the honour to report in my despatch No. 13, Commercial, the disease has appeared as far north as Jangal between Turbat-i-Haidri and Birjand. Captain Watson reports from Jangal that there have been sixty-five cases and fifty-five deaths, but he is uncertain of the accuracy of these figures, which he obtained from a native source. Captain Watson took energetic measures to stamp out the disease, and on the 9th instant His Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed telegraphed to say that as there had been no case of plague at Jangal since the 26th May last, Captain Watson would proceed to Birjand on the 15th instant. In accordance with your instructions I have asked the Persian Government to recognize Captain Watson as British Vice-Consul at Birjand. He will arrive there about the 23rd instant.

Copies of the Minutes of the meeting of the 8th May of the Tehran Sanitary Council are inclosed herewith.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 23.

*Procès-verbal of 23rd Meeting of Tehran Sanitary Council, held May 8, 1906.*

LA séance est ouverte à 3 heures, sous la présidence du M. le Docteur Lindley, Médecin particulier de Sa Majesté Impériale le Schah.

Étaient présents:

MM. les Docteurs Scott, d'Obermayer, Cornick, Sadowsky, Roch, Regling, Georges, Bongrand, Galley, Bagher Khan, Mirza Ibrahim Khan, Mohamed Khan, Nézam-ul-Hokema, son Excellence Réza Ghoul Khan, M. Wibier, et M. Lecomte.

M. le Docteur Lindley, en ouvrant la séance, exprime ses regrets de l'absence du Président, M. le Docteur Schneider, et ses souhaits les plus vifs pour son prompt rétablissement.

Il propose que deux membres du Conseil, un Persan, son Excellence Réza Ghoul Khan, et le Docteur Georges, soient envoyés près de lui, pour prendre de ses nouvelles au nom du Conseil Sanitaire.

Cette proposition est adoptée à l'unanimité.

Le Docteur Lindley adresse ses remerciements à son Excellence Ala-ul-Molk, Ministre de l'Instruction Publique, et à son Excellence Réza Ghoul Khan, qui ont bien voulu mettre à la disposition du Conseil Sanitaire la salle de la bibliothèque comme lieu de réunion des séances mensuelles, et un local pour y installer les archives du Conseil. En l'absence de son Excellence Ala-ul-Molk, son Excellence Réza Ghoul Khan s'engage à transmettre à son Excellence le Ministre de l'Instruction Publique les remerciements exprimés par le Conseil Sanitaire.

Le Docteur Lindley présente aux membres du Conseil M. le Docteur Cornick, médecin de la Banque Impériale, et M. le Docteur Mirza Ibrahim Khan, récemment nommé membre du Conseil Sanitaire.

Le Président propose donc de procéder à la lecture du procès-verbal de la précédente séance et demande si ce procès-verbal est adopté sans rectification.

M. le Docteur d'Obermayer déclare qu'il s'était proposé de demander une rectification, mais en l'absence de M. le Docteur Schneider, il préfère remettre à plus tard les observations qu'il croit devoir faire.

Le procès-verbal est adopté, sous réserve des restrictions présentées par M. le Docteur d'Obermayer.

Le Docteur Lindley demande à M. Lecomte de bien vouloir procéder à la lecture des lettres qui ont trait à l'épidémie de peste du Sistan.

Le 2 Avril.—Lettre du Sous-Gouverneur du Sistan à son Altesse Impériale l'Atabek-Azam pour lui faire connaître les causes réelles, selon lui, des épidémies qui ont eu lieu.

Le 3 Avril.—Lettre de l'Administration des Douanes relatant que M. Catterseel aurait constaté à la quarantaine de Bindan, où plus de 200 personnes sont en observation, un manque complet de céréales et de fourrages.

Le Gouverneur du Sistan s'est contenté de mettre à la disposition de la quarantaine 3 khavars d'orge et 5 de paille. Il est nécessaire d'exiger des ordres formels pour que les prescriptions de son Altesse Impériale l'Atabek-Azam soient répétées et pour que la totalité des 1,000 khavars d'orge soit remise au service sanitaire.

En ce qui concerne Nassirabad, le calme revient peu à peu. La situation sanitaire de Hosseinabad, de Dadi et des environs s'est, par contre, aggravée.

Les cavaliers Hezaré ont abandonné le service sanitaire et se sont dirigés sur Tourbet.

Le 3 Avril.—Lettre du Docteur Schneider à son Excellence Mouchir-ed-Dowleh, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, pour insister sur la nécessité de calmer la population.

Le 3 Avril.—Confirmation de la nouvelle que la peste n'existait pas à Aliabad.

Le 4 Avril.—Lettre du Docteur Schneider à son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères pour lui faire connaître qu'il juge que la responsabilité de Mirza Sadegh Khan lui semble fort atténuée, car ce fonctionnaire n'a agi que d'après les conseils techniques des membres de la Commission Sanitaire.

La modification de l'attitude de la population a coïncidé avec l'arrivée du médecin Persan Malek-el-Hokema.

Télégramme du Docteur Zaplatinsky en date du 2 Avril. Les difficultés que rencontrent les membres de la Commission Sanitaire sont considérables en raison de la mauvaise volonté générale et des affirmations du médecin Malek-el-Hokema que la maladie qui ravage le Sistan n'est pas la peste.

Après lecture de ce télégramme, le Docteur Lindley déclare que, selon lui, c'est une faute et un danger d'envoyer Malek-el-Hokema à Birdjend; il propose de demander du Gouvernement le renvoi de ce médecin à Méched et demande à ce sujet l'avis du Conseil. M. Wibier estime également que la place de Malek-el-Hokema ne peut être à Birdjend, où se trouvera d'ailleurs un médecin Russe. Le Conseil Sanitaire approuve cette déclaration.

Le 4 Avril.—Lettre du Docteur Schneider à son Excellence Mouchir-ed-Dowleh sur la nécessité d'établir des postes quaranténaires sur toutes les routes qui viennent du Nayzar et qui conduisent à Méched et à Kirman.

Ces postes quaranténaires devraient être composés de plusieurs échelons de façon à établir des filtres successifs pour les voyageurs. Aux premiers postes seuls serait imposée une observation de cinq jours.

Le 5 Avril.—Lettre de M. l'Administrateur-Général des Douanes au sujet de Colonel Karai Hadi Khan et des difficultés qu'il suscite.

Le 5 Avril.—Lettre de M. l'Administrateur-Général des Douanes au sujet de l'aggravation des troubles au Sistan.

Le 7 Avril.—Lettre de M. l'Administrateur-Général des Douanes concernant les plaintes que provoquent l'ignorance et le mauvais vouloir du médecin Malek-el-Hokema, qui conseille à la population de repousser l'inoculation, et se vante d'avoir guéri de nombreux malades par des applications de sangsues ou de fentre chauffé.

Le 10 Avril.—Lettre de M. l'Administrateur-Général des Douanes pour couvrir les membres du personnel de la Douane, faisant partie de la Commission Sanitaire du Sistan, qui ne se sont pas départis un seul instant du plus grand calme et d'une excessive patience. L'hôpital créé à Sangtehoulé a donné les meilleurs résultats.

A Dadeh, Sangtehoulé, Deh Gorgh, Deh Ekber-Abad, Djaffar Chahbaz, Deh Avaz, Deh Zein-el-Chahbek il y a journellement de nombreux décès. A Nassirabad il y a encore de nombreux malades dans la ville et le faubourg.

Le 10 Avril.—D'après les renseignements fournis par M. Catterseel depuis le début de l'épidémie jusqu'au 8 Avril, il se serait produit au Sistan 563 cas de peste, suivis de 483 décès.

Le 11 Avril.—M. Césari, Inspecteur du service des Douanes de la région d'Avaz, fait connaître par un télégramme que de nombreux fugitifs Sistanis, estimés à plus d'un millier, se dirigent vers le nord par la route d'Avaz-Bamrouth, traversant le désert entre Behring et Bendan pour éviter la quarantaine.

Le 17 Avril.—Lettre de son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères au Docteur Schneider.

D'après les télégrammes reçus par le Gouverneur du Khorasan depuis deux jours, on a organisé à Birdjend, Toniebiz, Torbet-Heideri, et Kauz des postes quaranténaires. Le médecin Russe est parti pour Birdjend.

*Le 25 Avril.*—Lettre de M. l'Administrateur-Général des Douanes pour demander de faire mettre à la disposition du service sanitaire les mulets et les chevaux de l'artillerie du Sistan, afin de transporter les grains et les vivres dans les villages infectés.

*Le 27 Avril.*—Lettre du Docteur Schneider au Docteur Lindley pour lui faire connaître qu'il a sollicité de son Altesse Impériale l'Atabek-Azam et de son Excellence Mouchir-ed-Dowleh un congé d'un mois, et pour lui transmettre la présidence du Conseil Sanitaire.

*Le 29 Avril.*—Lettre de son Excellence Mouchir-ed-Dowleh au Docteur Schneider pour lui exprimer ses regrets au sujet de sa maladie et ses meilleurs souhaits de prompt rétablissement.

Le local offert aux réunions du Conseil Sanitaire sera à l'avenir au Ministère de l'Instruction Publique.

Lettre du Docteur Schneider à son Altesse Impériale l'Atabek-Azam, transmettant un Rapport dans lequel il dégage la responsabilité du Conseil Sanitaire, et il regrette devoir dire que les mesures décrétées par Téhéran n'ont pas été exécutées ou ont été rendues inutiles par suite de la mauvaise volonté des autorités locales.

Son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères approuve la nomination du Docteur Lindley aux fonctions de Président intérimaire du Conseil Sanitaire.

*Le 28 Avril.*—Lettre de M. l'Administrateur-Général des Douanes.

La situation sanitaire continue à s'aggraver d'une façon générale. A Nasratabad et à Hosseïnabad, du 13 au 23 Avril, vingt-huit décès se seraient produits dans la première localité et trente-quatre dans la seconde.

Il y a actuellement sept ou huit décès quotidiens dans les deux villes.

Les localités suivantes seraient infectées : Nassirabad, Hosseïnabad, Kerbaneh, Bouli, Balak Khan, Deh Kasdar, Deh Ali-Gholi, Boudjar, Dadeh, Deh Avaz, Deh Sangtehoudi, Deh Akber-Abbas, Deh Ali-Akber, Deh Djafar-Chahbaz, Deh Zein-el-Chahbeg, Deh Gorgh, Deh Akber-Abad, Fouti, Deh Lotfollah, Afzel-Abad, Dowlet-Abad, Djaleh, Chilling, Djoutil, Deh Koul.

*Le 4 Mai.*—Lettre de M. l'Administrateur-Général des Douanes. Un négociant Indien demande l'autorisation d'expédier de Nassirabad à Méched des tapis.

Le Docteur Lindley demande l'avis du Conseil. A l'unanimité l'interdiction temporaire est adoptée.

*Le Mai 8.*—Télégramme du Gouverneur du Sistan au sujet du blé, dont il aurait déjà distribué 500 kharvars. Son Excellence Mouchir-ed-Dowleh, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, demande si cette quantité est suffisante.

Le Docteur Lindley sollicite l'avis du Conseil.

M. Wibier déclare que, d'après M. Molitor, il fallait 1,000 kharvars.

Le Docteur Georges estime que le chiffre des kharvars nécessaires ne peut être fourni que par la Commission Sanitaire du Sistan.

M. Wibier propose de télégraphier à M. Catterseel pour lui demander des renseignements.

Cette proposition est adoptée.

Après lecture de ces lettres, le Docteur Lindley adresse, au nom du Conseil Sanitaire, ses remerciements à M. Molitor et à M. Catterseel pour le bon exemple qu'ils ont donné aux populations en se faisant inoculer publiquement le sérum antipesteux.

Sur une question posée par le Docteur Lindley, à l'unanimité le Conseil affirme de nouveau qu'il n'y a aucun doute à avoir sur la réalité de l'existence et de l'identité de la peste dans la région du Sistan.

Le Président fait ensuite procéder à la lecture de deux lettres qui lui ont été adressées par M. Wibier, et dans lesquelles il fait une relation très documentée de la pathogénie et du développement de l'épidémie de peste du Sistan.

Après lecture de ces lettres, le Docteur Lindley remercie, au nom du Conseil, M. Wibier.

La discussion sur l'épidémie de peste est close.

Le Président fait part au Conseil de documents qui démontrent que de nombreux cas de variole sont signalés à Guilin et dans la région de Bouchir.

Il propose de demander du Gouvernement de bien vouloir envoyer des instructions aux Gouverneurs de chacune de ces provinces, et leur recommander les inoculations préventives.

L'état sanitaire des autres provinces de la Perse est satisfaisant ; seule la fièvre typhoïde semble avoir pris quelque extension.

Au sujet d'une lettre reçue, le Président revient encore une fois sur la question du sucre, qui un instant fut suspecté d'avoir été empoisonné. En l'absence de tout décès et tout semblant de preuve, le Docteur Lindley estime que la question ne peut être prise au sérieux, et qu'elle est définitivement réglée.

Le Docteur Georges demande la parole au sujet des lavoirs. Actuellement les lavoirs nouvellement construits seraient totalement dépourvus d'eau. Le Docteur Georges exprime le désir qu'on écrive à ce sujet au Ministre de la Police.

Le Docteur Lindley s'engage à le faire.

M. Wibier demande si la Commission pour la tuberculose s'est réunie. Cette réunion n'a pu encore avoir lieu.

Le Docteur d'Obernayer remet au Conseil quelques documents concernant la peste en Égypte, ainsi que d'autres pièces concernant la santé publique en Turquie.

Le Docteur Lindley fait part au Conseil des chiffres relatifs à la mortalité de Téhéran au cours du mois d'Avril. La moyenne des décès a été de soixante-douze par semaine. Les affections dominantes ont été la fièvre typhoïde, les maladies des voies respiratoires, et tout spécialement la tuberculose.

Le Docteur Scott donne les renseignements au sujet de la peste à Bombay et à Karatchi :—

Temps.			Endroit.	Cas.	Décès.
Février	..	..	Bombay	708	608
Février	..	..	Karatchi	57	52
Mars	..	..	Bombay	2,877	2,545
Mars	..	..	Karatchi	257	209
Semaine précédant le 2 Mai	..	..	Bombay	1,141	1,059
"	"	"	Karatchi	299	237

Le Vice-Président accuse réception des Rapports de Docteur Zaplatinsky, Docteur Sheikh Ahmed Khan, et Mirza Sadeq Khan concernant la peste.

Aucun membre du Conseil Sanitaire ne présentant plus d'observation, la séance est levée à 5 heures et demie.

Le Président *ad interim*,  
(Signé) Dr. LINDLEY.

[23103]

No. 24.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 104.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, June 26, 1906.

I MENTIONED to M. Isvolsky yesterday that it had been reported from an unofficial source that the Persian Government were allowing it to be understood that an offer had been made to them of a Russian loan of 2,000,000*l*. I said that no credence was attached to this report, as it was not the first time that the Persian authorities had allowed reports of this nature to be disseminated, possibly with the object of inducing others to come forward with offers of a similar character. I only mentioned this report to him in order to place him on his guard, as I knew that the Russian Government would abide by the understanding regarding Persian loans which had been made with his predecessor, Count Lamdorff.

M. Isvolsky thanked me for having alluded to the report, but he could assure me that, since he had been in office, there had been no question of any loan to Persia. He added that, at the present moment, however, the Russian Government or Russian banks were not in a position to lend money to any one.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.



[23211]

No. 25.

*Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)*

(No. 446.)

Sir,

*Constantinople, July 2, 1906.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 433 of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the Military Attaché to His Majesty's Embassy respecting the concentration of Ottoman troops on the Persian frontier.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 25.

*Colonel Surtees to Sir N. O'Connor.*

(No. 37.)

Sir,

*Constantinople, July 2, 1906.*

WITH reference to my despatch to your Excellency No. 34 of the 22nd June, I have the honour herewith to inclose two schedules, the one (A) showing the usual dislocation of the troops composing the XIIIth Division of the VIth Army Corps, which division is permanently stationed in the districts bordering on the Persian frontier, and the other (B) a record of those troops of the IVth and Vth Army Corps which, within the last six months, have from time to time been reported by His Majesty's Consular Representatives in Eastern Asia Minor as having passed through their districts *en route* for Wazné and the frontier.

It will be seen that the troops enumerated on the two schedules attain to a joint total of:—

31 battalions of infantry,  
5 batteries of artillery (30 guns),  
3 cavalry regiments,  
1,500 Hamidieh cavalry sabres,

representing, perhaps, a total of 22,000 men. These numbers are, moreover, generally corroborated by a report furnished to me by Captain Mark Sykes, who has just returned to Sinope from travelling in the Erbil district.

It is therefore somewhat difficult to understand the remark of the Grand Vizier to your Excellency to the effect that the statement that some thirty battalions were threatening the Persian frontier was a gross exaggeration.

In considering the force available for purposes of aggression against Persia, it must be remembered that only a fraction of the Redif and Hamidieh troops of the IVth and Vth Army Corps have been mobilized, and that the Persian army is practically a *quantité négligeable*. Hence it is apparent that Turkey is in a position to impose her will upon Persia, unless other Powers should decide to intervene.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) H. CONYERS SURTEES,  
Military Attaché.

Inclosure 2 in No. 25.

## SCHEDULE (A).

DISLOCATION of the 12th Infantry Division and of the Cavalry and Artillery of the VIth Army Corps on or near the Persian Frontier.

XIIIth Division. Headquarters: Kirkuk.

Commander: Ferik Lutfi Pasha.

Brigade.	Regiment.	Remarks.
23RD BRIGADE. Headquarters: Kirkuk. Under Hussein Pasha.	45th Regiment. Headquarters: Kirkuk. Under Ahmed Tewfik Bey.	The four battalions are distributed at Kassim, Suleimanieh, Keni Sanjak, and Kirkuk. (At the latter place is a battalion mounted on mules and acting as mounted infantry.)
	46th Regiment. Headquarters: Suleimanieh.	The four battalions are stationed: (1) at Kirkuk, under Bindasini Abdul Halima Effendi, appointed January 1906; (2) Hamadieli, (3) Rania, (4) Chemchemah.
[24TH BRIGADE. Headquarters: Mosul. Under Mohammed Fakr Pasha.	47th Regiment. Headquarters: Mosul. Under Mustafa Akif Bey.	The four battalions are stationed at: (1) Rowanduz, (2) Sinjar, (3) Erbil, (4) Kifri, but there is reason to suppose that (2) has been moved eastwards.
	48th Regiment. Headquarters: Mosul.	The four battalions are distributed in the Mosul district, with a detachment at Zakho and possibly at Diwanieh.

*Of the Cavalry.*—15 squadrons, belonging to the 31th (Khanikin), 35th (Mosul), and 36th (Kirkuk) Regiments, are available.

*Of Artillery.*—There are batteries at Diwanieh and at Suleimanieh which would be available, and these might be further reinforced from Bagdad.

Of the above force, only the battalion of the 45th Regiment at Kassim would appear to be available. The 12th Nishanji battalion, which is also at Kassim, has not been taken into account.

The total, then, of regular troops at present stationed within striking distance of the Persian frontier between Passara and Khanikin, and belonging to the VIth Army Corps, is:—

15 battalions,  
15 squadrons,  
2 batteries (12 guns),

representing, perhaps, 12,000 men.

Besides these, a mixed force of 425 men is reported to have entered the Seyid Hassan line coming from Bagdad.

July 2, 1906.

(Signed) H. CONYERS SURTEES, Colonel.



## SCHEDULE (B).

SHOWING troops reported to have proceeded towards the Persian frontier since the beginning of 1906, and belonging to the IVth and Vth Army Corps.

Date.		Number of Battalions, &c., moved towards the Persian Frontier.	
		Battalions.	Guns.
January 23, 1906 ..	III.76 (Redifs of Vth Army Corps) passed Bitlis, probably to replace other troops moved to frontier III.74 (Redifs of Vth Army Corps) passed Diarbekir from Kharpout, proceeding via Mosul to frontier ..	.. ..	.. ..
January 25 ..	Four battalions arrive at Mosul: these probably include the two above-mentioned, and the Redifs of Bitlis and Mush, I and II/60, which were called out about Christmas, 1905 .. ..	..	..
February 12 ..	II/20 (Van) arrives at Mosul from Van, and "a battalion" leaves Mosul for Wazné .. .. II/32 leaves Mosul for Wazné .. ..	1 1	.. ..
February 13 ..	Four battalions, which had arrived at Mosul "from Anatolia," leave for the frontier .. .. One battalion, which had arrived at Mosul from Mardin, leaves for the frontier .. ..	4 1	.. ..
February 14 ..	II (?)/31 leaves Mosul for the frontier .. .. (3 battalions are reported to be at Mosul.)	1	..
February 17 ..	The II/31 is reported to have left Bitlis en route for Wazné before this date (c. February 14) .. .. The III/32 is reported to have already passed .. .. And also the I/32 and IV/32, proceeding to the frontier .. ..	.. 1 2	.. .. ..
February 25 ..	The IV/31 arrives at Mosul from Anatolia, and also the II/23 (artillery)* .. ..	..	..
March 24 ..	The IV/31 leaves Mosul for Wazné .. .. The II/23 artillery leaves Mosul for Wazné .. .. Also "a battalion" (number not given) .. .. And V/24 (mountain artillery) .. ..	1 .. 1 ..	.. 6 .. 6
March 27 ..	The V/23 artillery also leaves .. ..	..	6
April 7 ..	A battalion of the 29th Regiment leaves Mosul for the frontier, .. ..	1	..
April 6 ..	8,000 Mauser rifles sent from Sivas to Wazné .. ..	..	..
April 9 ..	Single battalions of the 23rd† and 29th Regiments leave Mosul for the frontier .. ..	2 (?)	..
May 2 ..	The II/27 moves from Erzerum to Mush .. ..	..	..
May 18 ..	"A" Hamidieh regiment, lately disbanded, is recalled to the Colours .. ..	..	..
	Total .. ..	16	18

\* This was reported as the 2nd battalion of the 33rd Infantry Regiment, evidently a mistake, as the 33rd Regiment (2nd battalion) is on the Hedjaz Railway.

† This regiment is not available, and the Consul probably means a *batterie* of the 23rd Artillery Regiment.

On February 13, 1,500 Hamidieh cavalry were officially reported to be proceeding to the frontier from the Mush district .. .. 1,500 sabres.

The total, then, of troops belonging to the IVth and Vth Army Corps, and moved towards the Persian frontier, appears to be:—

16 battalions.  
18 guns (3 batteries), and  
1,500 sabres.

Perhaps, in all, 10,000 men.

Some 40,000 armed tribesmen are not included.

H. CONVERS SURTEES, *Colonel,*  
*Military Attaché.*

July 2, 1906.

[24368]

No. 26.

*Question asked in the House of Commons, July 9, 1906.*

Sir William Evans-Gordon,—To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any information in regard to a German Syndicate having presented an application to the Persian Government for a Railway Concession from Khanikin, over the Turco-Persian frontier, to Kermanshah in Persian territory.

*Answered by Mr. Runciman (for Sir Edward Grey).*

I have nothing to add to the answer given to the honourable Member for Montgomery District on the 13th June, to the effect that I could give no information.

[24369]

No. 27.

*Question asked in the House of Commons, July 9, 1906.*

Sir William Evans-Gordon,—To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is in a position to give the date and place of meeting of the Turco-Persian Boundary Commission in regard to Passova.

*Answer.*

The answer to this question is in the negative.

[23376]

No. 28.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)*

(No. 176.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 9, 1906.*

PARCY Oil Agreement.

The Bakhtiari Khans have been forbidden by the Persian Government to leave Tehran until they shall have concluded with the Syndicate an agreement in conformity with the Shah's views.

It is suggested by the Persian Government that a representative should be sent out at once by the Syndicate to discuss the matter with a Persian representative and the Legation.

[23381]

No. 29.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)*

(No. 177.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 9, 1906.*

FOLLOWING sent to India:—

"Telegram No. 335 from His Majesty's Consul in Seistan to Government of India.

"Any requests to bring in arms and ammunition will certainly be refused by Persian Government.

"I think our Consular escort in Seistan should not be inferior in numbers to that of the Russians.

"I recommended recently the strengthening of all our Consular guards in Persia, but such guards could not, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, afford efficient protection in the event of an outbreak against foreigners.

"I personally do not believe that any Persian mob would face a few determined men."

[23516]

No. 30.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 10.)*

(No. 178.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 10, 1906.*

I HAVE received message from principal priest in Tehran stating that people are prepared to overthrow present Government, and that His Majesty's Government should grant him pecuniary assistance now, if ever they intend to do so. If you approve, I shall reply that British Legation cannot support movement against present Government in any way.

Priests may possibly take refuge at His Majesty's Legation, which would cause considerable inconvenience.

Could we come to understanding with Russian Government to cause dismissal of present Grand Vizier, during whose tenure of office situation cannot be improved?

Shah has probably no knowledge of actual condition of affairs.

[23516]

No. 31.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Grant Duff.*

(No. 92.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, July 11, 1906.*

THE proposal for the removal of the Grand Vizier, contained in your telegram No. 178 of yesterday, could only be carried out by interfering in the internal affairs of Persia, and complications would thereby be produced which neither the Russian Government nor ourselves desire.

Your proposed reply to the Mollahs is approved.

[23708]

No. 32.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 12.)*

(No. 179.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 12, 1906.*

THERE was a disturbance in Tehran yesterday and the shops are still closed. Many persons killed and wounded, a Soggyed being among the former.

[23717]

No. 33.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 12.)*

(No. 180.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 12, 1906.*

THERE is a report here that Persian Government are about to obtain a loan from Belgian financiers. Rumour comes from Brussels.

[23837]

No. 34.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 13.)*

(No. 181.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 13, 1906.*

I HAVE sent the following telegram to Government of India:—

"Quarantine on Perso-Afghan frontier.

"Your telegram to Secretary of State for India of the 29th June.

"I have received a letter from the Russian Minister here stating that there is no truth in the report that the Russians intend to place quarantine posts on the Afghan frontier. Persian Government have not yet given me any answer."

[23840]

No. 35.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 13.)*

(No. 182.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 13, 1906.*

SEVERAL people killed in further disturbances which took place in Tehran to-day, and shops are still shut. I consider the situation serious.

[23717]

No. 36.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Hardinge.*

(No. 14.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, July 13, 1906.*

LOAN to Persia (see Mr. Grant Duff's telegram No. 180 of yesterday repeated to you).

Is there any confirmation of the rumour?

[23376]

No. 37.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 91.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, July 13, 1906.*

OIL Syndicate: See your telegram No. 176 of the 9th instant.

The following is the view of the Syndicate; it seems to be correct, and you should support it:—

They are empowered, under Article 3 of their Concession, to make arrangements with individuals.

The Concession gives them full right to exploit the whole of Persia, with the exception of certain northern provinces specified therein.

They cannot therefore see their way to reopen the question.

[23904]

No. 38.

*The Persian Transport Company to Foreign Office.—(Received July 14.)*

3, Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street,  
London, July 12, 1906.

Sir,

I HAVE laid before my Board your despatch of the 2nd instant on the subject of the Bakhtiari road.

In reply, my Board wish to recall to you the fact that the Chiefs derive a revenue of about 3,000*l.* a-year from this road. They have farmed out the tolls alone for 2,400*l.* for this year, and, in addition to this source of revenue, they derive profit from the sale of fodder in the caravanserais, the price of the fodder being represented to us by the muleteers as very much in excess of the current prices in the district. Neither of these two sources of this revenue existed before we constructed the road; and therefore they have derived a pecuniary advantage which—even with the present volume of traffic, which is in its infancy—would amount to a capitalized value of more than 60,000*l.*; or, to put it in another way, they are already in receipt of interest on the cost of the road amounting to about 35 per cent., the cost being taken at 8,500*l.* (the actual cost), or of 55 per cent. on 5,500*l.* (the cost which they acknowledge). What they have done in the way of repairs is so insignificant as to be scarcely worth mentioning.

Against these solid advantages to them no advantages have accrued to us except those that we share to a very limited degree with British and Indian traders in general. On the contrary, an amount of work and worry has devolved upon us which has not been equalled in the case of any of our other enterprises. The Chiefs have from the first refused to meet us on any point, no doubt misinterpreting our generosity towards them as a sign that we were substantial gainers. They have not accepted the cost of the road, the sterling basis of the debt, the period within which the loan is repayable; and they have not performed their part of the bargain, namely, the maintenance of the road in at least the same condition as that in which it was handed over. In order to bring pressure upon the Legation in Tehran, they have from the first represented us not as their benefactors, but as their oppressors; and to this policy on their part full expression is given in the despatch under acknowledgment.

On the other hand, His Majesty's Government have quite recently had evidence of our strong desire to help the Chiefs to the utmost of our ability, even at the risk of seeming importunate to the Foreign Office. When they telegraphed to us recently that they were badly in need of money, we approached both the India and Foreign Offices in the matter, and, at the suggestion of the Foreign Office, we also approached the Imperial Bank of Persia. Years ago it was pointed out to us that perhaps we committed an error in not making a personal advance of money to the Akhani, Haji Ali Kuli Khan, who happened to be in Europe. The advance of money on that occasion, under the circumstances then prevailing, did not seem to us to be justified; but we were not slow to remember the advice that was then tendered to us. It was in this spirit that we have recently been anxious to spare neither time nor trouble in coming to the assistance of the Chiefs; and it is painful to us that, at the very time that they were telegraphing to us for money, they should, according to the report of our agent at Tehran, have been villifying us to His Majesty's Legation. Perhaps you will allow us in addition to point out that we are always doing these Chiefs small services, such as procuring rifles and sporting guns for them. They are in regular communication with our agents, with whom their relations are apparently of the most friendly and confidential nature.

Turning now to the specific proposals contained in your despatch, my Board are in agreement with the Secretary of State that the first proposal is unreasonable, and cannot be accepted. As regards the second, the question of the bridges was recently considered at a full meeting of the Board, and it was decided that, in view of the supreme importance of the condition of the bridges as affecting the whole enterprise, it was essential that these bridges should be inspected annually, and repairs executed if necessary. With structures of this nature, subjected to very great strain at certain periods of the year (at the time of the migrations of the tribes, when hundreds of animals are herded together upon them), it is of the utmost importance that any flaw should be detected as soon as possible and made good. If the flaw or defect be allowed to go further, expensive repairs are necessitated; and it must be borne in mind that any new material would have to be sent out from England into the heart of the

Bakhtiari country. If, therefore, the inspection were made every other year or once in three years not only would the expense, in the long run, be likely to be greater, but the structures, solid as they are, might suffer in a very grave manner, the final expense being such as would astonish the Chiefs and probably lead to the abandonment of the road. My Board therefore remain of the same opinion, namely, that a yearly inspection is absolutely necessary. At the same time we would welcome a scrutiny on the part of His Majesty's Consul at Ahwaz of all expenses incurred in connection with the inspection and repair. They will, of course, be kept at the lowest possible figure compatible with efficiency.

As regards the third proposal, my Board take note of the promises of the Chiefs to build two caravanserais this year and two next year, and to repair the caravanserais which are in bad condition this year. His Majesty's Consul, after his forthcoming inspection, will be able to advise His Majesty's Government whether these works have been completed in a satisfactory manner. At the same time we would venture to recommend that His Majesty's Consul be instructed to inquire into the price charged at the caravanserais for fodder, we having received grave complaints on this matter from owners of transport on the road.

The fourth proposal is to the effect that the Chiefs are now carrying on repairs at various points on the road; and that, should His Majesty's Consul find the road in need of further repair, the Chiefs will make those further repairs. This proposal can only be judged by the result, which we trust will be entirely satisfactory to His Majesty's Government, and will at least restore the road to the condition in which we handed it over to the Chiefs.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) H. W. MACLEAN.

[23861]

No. 39.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 11.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copies of two telegrams relative to Seistan affairs.

*India Office, July 13, 1906.*

Inclosure 1 in No. 39.

*Mr. Morley to Government of India.*

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

*India Office, July 11, 1906.*

SEISTAN. Grant Duff's telegram 9th instant.

Please repeat Seistan telegram to you No. 335. See my telegram of 26th February and yours of 17th March. Please see that instructions are observed.

Inclosure 2 in No. 39.

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

*Simla, July 12, 1906.*

SEISTAN. Your telegram 11th July. Seistan telegram of the 5th July:—

"I understand from Hughes that services of Robat levies may be required on trade route. On reconsidering matter, I am of opinion they could now be withdrawn with safety.

"Plague appears to be dying out and likelihood of further disturbances therefore lessened. Arrival of troops in Robat has undoubtedly had effect on people here. Lastly, recent action of Deputy-Governor in Banjar incident has shown people that local authorities are not always prepared to shield them.

[11064]

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"I would, however, recommend that their withdrawal, whenever it may be effected, be made conditional on grant of certain concessions by Persian Government. These might be, firstly, permission to bring in arms and ammunition now lying at Robat, necessity for which has been amply demonstrated; and, secondly, permission to increase strength of escort to thirty men. Having regard to what has occurred, Persian Government may find some difficulty in disputing our claim.

"As regards increase of escort, this would seem to be desirable now for several reasons. Strength of Russian escort is thirty men, and numerical inferiority of our escort has undoubtedly been noted by the people, and, in country where great importance attaches to military display, probably tends to increase their influence at our expense. Moreover, suggested increase may conceivably be necessary for the purpose of protection, since possibility of recurrence of plague and consequent likelihood of disturbances cannot be overlooked."

Owing to want of telegraphic communication between Robat and Seistan, Daukes' telegram only reached us on 8th instant, and was under consideration here. Our views on his proposals will now follow.

[23956]

No. 40.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 15.)*

(No. 183.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 15, 1906.

BELGIAN loan.

With reference to my telegram No. 180 of the 12th instant, I am informed by Minister of Customs that there is no truth in rumour respecting loan, but that Shah is willing to lend Persian Government 500,000*l.* from secret private treasury left by Nasr-ud-Din Shah. M. Rabino believes that this treasury exists.

[23957]

No. 41.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 15.)*

(No. 184.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 15, 1906.

RIOTING in Tehran. My telegram No. 182 of the 13th instant.

Mollahs ordered that shops should open yesterday, and are negotiating with Government. They desire dismissal of Grand Vizier, who, unless he be able to obtain money, may fall.

All shops are closed to-day and troops have surrounded mosque, in which Mollahs remain.

[23987]

No. 42.

*Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 16.)*

(No. 103.)

Sir,

Brussels, July 10, 1906.

THE First Secretary of the Persian Legation here called on me to-day and asked if I could inform him whether Mr. Darcy's oil concession gave that gentleman a monopoly extending over the whole of Persia, and, if not, whether His Majesty's Government would view with favour the grant of similar privileges to an English Company, in so far as these were consistent with the rights enjoyed by Mr. Darcy. He gave me to understand that he had been sounded on this subject by certain capitalists who were, he said, English, but who I am inclined to suspect, if there is any truth whatever in his story, may possibly be Germans. He added that his friends were desirous of obtaining side by side with this petroleum concession one for a railway in Persia.

I told Mirza Hassan Khan that Mr. Darcy's concession, which he had transferred, in conformity with its terms, to the Bernah Corporation, gave him a monopoly for the whole of Persia, exclusive of the five northern provinces; that these had been excluded because the late Grand Vizier had been unwilling to give umbrage to Russia, and that I did not think that you would wish to encourage the grant to an English Company of

[23938]

No. 39\*.

*Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 14.)*

(No. 5.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Brussels, July 14, 1906.

BELGIAN loan to Persia: With reference to Mr. Grant Duff's telegram No. 180 of the 12th instant.

The report may possibly, I think, be true, in which case I would suspect that the Belgians are acting under German influence (see my despatch No. 103), but I have no information on the subject.

I should expect the transaction to take the form of a sale of an important political concession. This would be less easy to prevent than a loan, which we probably could stop.

In either case it would be desirable that my Russian colleague and I should concert together with regard to the action to be taken in the matter.

exclusive rights in a part of Persian territory in which we had always recognized the importance, if not the predominance, of Russian interests. He knew, I thought, as well as I did that all railway concessions were out of the question until the expiration in 1910 of the Russo-Persian Railway Agreement.

Mirza Hassan Khan is a person of no importance, and his chief is even more insignificant, but he is, I believe, a great friend of the Moayyed-es-Sultaneh (late Persian Minister at Berlin), a very intelligent Persian, well known to me, and who is now doing a "cure" in Austria. I should never be surprised if the Moayyed were to try to interest German financiers in concessions, railway or other, in Persia, and in view of the reports which have been spread in many quarters of an increased interest on the part of Germany in Persian affairs, I think it right to mention the questions put to me by this Persian diplomatist. In the course of conversation Mirza Hassan Khan referred very freely to the disturbed condition of Persia, and expressed his opinion that the activity of the Ulema was being stimulated by the late Grand Vizier, who would, he thought, most certainly return to power whenever the Valiahd succeeded the Shah. He himself belonged to the "Young Persia" party, and was in strong sympathy with the movement for reform. He referred incidentally to the possibility of a revolution which would overthrow the Kajar dynasty, but thought it more likely that disturbances would be local and sporadic rather than general or simultaneous throughout the country. He did not believe that the Shoa-es-Sultaneh would prove a serious pretender to the throne, though he might have done so had he made friends, instead of enemies, of some of the powerful tribes of Southern Persia.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

[24248]

No. 43.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 16.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 14th July, relative to affairs in Seistan.

*India Office, July 16, 1906.*

Inclosure in No. 43.

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*July 14, 1906.*

SEISTAN. We repeat for information the following telegrams from Consul. Our views thereon will follow.

No. 1, dated 10th July. Addressed to Government of India, Foreign Department. Repeated to Tehran and Meshed:—

"It is reported that Persian official deputed to inquire into disturbances which occurred last spring is within a few days' march of Seistan. Reinforcement of Persian troops with mounted men and guns, numbering some 300 or 400 men, so far as can be ascertained, are also reported to be on their way from Khorassan towards Seistan.

"Husseinabad has also been visited by Deputy Governor, who is co-operating for the first time with the Director of Customs. Some of the houses in the town are being disinfected.

"Rumours circulate here that it is the intention of the Persian Government to inflict summary punishment on those involved in the disturbances of last spring. Owing to uncertainty as to the course which will be followed by new official, a general feeling of unrest exists in Husseinabad. Rumours, which seem designed to reach me, are being spread by ringleaders of disturbances to the effect that further disturbances will attend any attempt to implicate them. They probably believe that Persian Government was induced to take energetic measures by us alone, and their

action seems to be due to this belief. To the best of my information those who have something to fear are the only ones who feel anxiety, and if any disturbance occurs it will probably be entirely local."

No. 2, dated 11th July. Addressed to Government of India, Foreign Department. Repeated to Tehran and Meshed:—

"A number of men, said to be inhabitants of Husseinabad, created a disturbance directed against this Consulate about midnight on the night of the 10th instant. Reliable information as to their identity or numbers could not be obtained owing to the darkness, but they probably numbered some ten or twelve persons. They scaled the wall of the Consulate, armed with sticks, and assaulted some employés of the Consulate who happened to be sleeping outside on account of the heat. No hurt, however, was done them, beyond slight bruises. The rioters fled on the escort falling in. Owing to darkness pursuit was not possible.

"I addressed a letter to the Deputy Governor couched in strong terms, telling him what had happened, and asking him to take measures for the protection of the Consulate. This disturbance, in my opinion, was worked up by the ringleaders of the disturbances of March last, for purposes of intimidation, and was entirely artificial in character. There appear to have been good grounds for the rumours mentioned in my telegram of 10th July. Firstly, there was not, as was the case in the March disturbances, any excitement in Husseinabad or in this city. Secondly, the rioters, in choosing the lowest part of the wall at a point as far away as possible from the sentry's beat, appear to have acted in accordance with some preconcerted plan. And, thirdly, the whole affair had more the appearance of an organized demonstration against us than a spontaneous outbreak of popular feeling. To-day there is no sign of any excitement.

"The present incident, although it does not in itself appear to be very serious, seems to show the attitude which those persons who were involved in the disturbances of last March may be expected to adopt. Possibly nothing further will happen. On the other hand, it is, however, possible that an agitation against us may be worked up successfully by the ringleaders of the spring disturbances, some of whom are men of considerable influence. In this event, having regard to the apathy of the Persian Government, we should have to rely on our own resources to meet the situation. An agitation of this nature, presuming that it occurs at all, might spring up at any moment. I trust, therefore, that my action may be approved in venturing to take upon myself the responsibility of requesting the officer in command at Robat to send here the spare arms and ammunition stored there as reserve for this Consulate. I also took on myself the responsibility of sending some of our levies under command of Duffadar of my escort with my letter to the officer in command at Robat as convoy for arms and ammunition."

[24261]

No. 44

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 16.)*

(No. 185.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 16, 1906.

TEHRAN riots. My telegram No. 184 of yesterday.

Principal Mollahs left Tehran to-day for a shrine not far from the town with numerous retinue, and state that they intend to go to Kerbela. It is probable that there will be local disturbances when the news is received in the provinces. Consuls have been warned. There have been no further disturbances in the town.

[24251]

No. 45.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Connor.*

(No. 108.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 16, 1906.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

I have been informed by the Russian Ambassador that his Government are anxious, in consequence of information from Tehran, as to the situation on the Turco-Persian frontier.

I understand that they will urge prudence upon the Persian Government, as His Majesty's Government are doing.

They suggest that you should make representations against the military concentration and aggressive attitude of the Turkish Government. You are authorized to do this, and your Russian colleague will co-operate in any representations in this sense which you may make.

[24251]

No. 46.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 96.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 16, 1906.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

The following telegram has been addressed to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople:—

(Foreign Office telegram to Sir N. O'Connor No. 108 of the 16th July.)

You should press the Persian Government to maintain an attitude of prudence, in concert with your Russian colleague.

[24367]

No. 47.

*Mr. Preece to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 17.)*

Sir,

1, St. James's Place, London, July 17, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to forward you herewith, confidentially, some notes regarding an oil Concession which has been given to the Minister of War at Tehran.

Of the places mentioned—viz., Tunkabes, Kudjour, and Kalaristag—I have only been able to locate the two latter, they are districts of Ghelan and Mazanderan, west and east of the River Chalas running into the Caspian. The first named may be Tunkabun, which is also in Mazanderan.

The Concessions Syndicate would be much obliged if you would kindly cause inquiries to be made in Tehran as to the date when this Concession was given and let them know the result.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. R. PREECE.

Inclosure in No. 47.

*Précis of Notes respecting a Persian Oil Concession.*

(Private and Confidential.)

THE Concession was granted to the Persian Minister for War by a Firman of the Shah. It is situated in the districts of Tunkabes, Kudjour, and Kalaristag, not far from Tehran. The area covered by the Concession is about 10,000 hectares = *circa* 24,000 acres. There are three natural petroleum pits on the Concession where the natives have been in the habit of getting their own supply.

The Concession has been given "for eternity."

Petroleum at present is the only illuminant used in the Persian Empire. Gas and electricity are only used in the Imperial Palace. The petroleum consumed in Persia is at present imported from Russia.

The original concessionnaire recently gave a power of attorney to the Persian Ambassador at Brussels under which the Concession was transferred to a firm in Amsterdam, who are now the vendors. The contract between the said Ambassador and firm contains, *inter alia*, the following clauses:—

The firm (vendors) has the right to transfer or make use of their own rights and privileges embodied in the Concession at its absolute discretion.

Of the original Concession, which is literally translated "for all eternity," the vendor firm hold it for a term of 75 years commencing from 1st January, 1907.

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The concessionnaire undertakes to place at the disposal of the prospective exploitation Company free of charge any lands or territories required in connection with the exploitation.

Any further petroleum Concessions that might be granted by the Persian Government have to be first offered to the prospective Company taking over the vendor's Concession, and the said Company's offer for such further Concession is to have preference over all others, *ceteris equalibus*.

The products of the Company are to be subject to such taxes only as shall be less than those imposed in any other petroleum-producing or petroleum-exporting country.

All imported machinery, chemicals, and other goods required for exploitation purposes are free from all duty or other tax.

The vendor firm is ready to form a Syndicate to take over the preliminary exploration of the Concession.

The said Syndicate will undertake to make a contract with a suitable financial group on the following terms:—

The group undertaking the finance of the ultimate Company to have the right of selecting an expert (to be approved by the Syndicate), and the Syndicate, at its own expense, undertakes to send out such expert to report on the Concession.

The expert's report to be the property of the Syndicate, but a duplicate original shall be placed at the disposal of the finance group upon condition that it is to be returned to the Syndicate if the finance group does not, within a time to be agreed on, decide to do the business, and, within a further time, to be agreed on from the receipt of the expert's report, enter into a contract to carry it through on the lines herein set forth.

If the financing party decides to do the business, then he must form an exploitation Company subject to the following basal conditions:—

The maximum total capital to be 1,200,000*l.*, divided into 500,000 6 per cent. preference shares, and the balance ordinary shares.

Out of this capital the vendor Syndicate is to receive not less than 580,000*l.* in cash and shares as under:—

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180,000	cash (represented by preference shares).
180,000	(ordinary shares, fully paid).
This 360,000 <i>l.</i> in cash and ordinary shares, is a payment which has to be made to the Persian Government and concessionnaire by the vendor Syndicate, who retain nothing out of it. The payment may be made direct by the exploitation Company to the Government and concessionnaire if required.	
60,000	cash (represented by preference shares); and
160,000	ordinary shares (fully paid).
This payment of 220,000 <i>l.</i> cash and ordinary shares goes to the vendor Syndicate as reimbursement of all the expenses and profits of the Syndicate.	
580,000	

After providing 580,000*l.* in the manner above set out there remain 720,000*l.* balance. Out of this balance the finance group must undertake to provide the working capital of not less than 250,000*l.* (in respect of which preference shares are to be issued), 100,000*l.* of this to be subscribed forthwith, and the balance as may be required by the Company for development.

The balance of 470,000*l.* ordinary shares to be issued as fully paid to the finance group, who will thereon pay all promotion expenses.

No debentures or other charges are to take precedence of the preference shares without the consent of not less than two-thirds of the preference shareholders for the time being. All shares to rank equally for dividend after first paying 6 per cent. on the preference shares and thereafter a like amount on the ordinary shares. The preference shares are also to have the preference as regards capital in the event of a winding up, and to share equally with the ordinary share for share, in the distribution of surplus assets.

The disparity between the working capital and total capital in the above capitalization is solely due to unavoidable payments to the Persian Government, and therefore cannot be objected to as undue arbitrary inflation.

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No. 48.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 17.)*

(No. 186.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 17, 1906.

MR. WRATISLAW has been informed by Turkish Consul-General at Tabreez that Turkish Commissioner will shortly start for Rowanduz from Mosul; the latter is of opinion, however, that until report on Sayboulak incident has been received at Constantinople nothing will be done. It appears that report is not likely to improve the situation.

[24475]

No. 49.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 18.)*

IN continuation of this Office letter of the 16th instant, the Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 15th instant, relative to Seistan affairs.

*India Office, July 18, 1906.*

*Inclosure in No. 49.*

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

*July 18, 1906.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

SEISTAN.

My telegram of the 14th July. Attack on Consulate.

We consider that, whatever may have been the motives of assailants, an attack on British Consulate at night-time in a town where ferment was caused by plague rioters is so grave a development of situation that it not only calls for demand for punishment of all persons implicated and for apology from Persian Government, but shows clearly that necessity has been established for placing our escort at same strength as that of Russians, and for storing within our Consulate such adequate reserve of ammunition and arms as were shown to be in possession of Russians at time of riots last spring.

Wisdom of sending arms with convoy of ten levies is questioned by our military authorities. We concur, and, to prevent risk of collision with mob or with Customs official, we propose to send convoy composed of fifty men of double company under a British officer. When Persian troops arrive convoy would be withdrawn, such men only being retained as would give the British Consular escort a strength equal to that of the Russians, provided that the Persian troops showed that they are intended to maintain order, and were capable of doing so. Until the situation quiets down the Chagai levies will remain at Nasratabad.

It should be borne in mind that, in night attack on Consulate, assailants only withdrew when guard fell in, and that, but for presence of escort and levies, therefore, lamentable consequences might have ensued. As regards telegraphic communication, we would point out that Russians possess five direct lines of telegraph across Persian frontier. Having regard to serious position of affairs, we would again press for completion of wire from Seistan to Rohat.

(Repeated to Tehran, Seistan, and Meshed, through Rohat.)

[24489]

No. 50.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 18.)*

(No. 187.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.  
SEISTAN.

*Tehran, July 18, 1906.*

I concur with views expressed in telegram of the 18th instant to Secretary of State for India from Government of India.

[23134]

No. 51.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 107.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, July 18, 1906.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 154 of the 11th ultimo, regarding the complaints made by the Persian Government against Agha Bedr, British Agent at Lingah.

I approve your reply to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh on this subject.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) EDWARD GREY.

[23141]

No. 52.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 108.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, July 18, 1906.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 161 of the 20th ultimo, regarding the removal by Russian officials of the battery and wire of the Seistan telegraph line.

The terms of the note, which you addressed to the Persian Government on the subject, have my approval.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) EDWARD GREY.

[23142]

No. 53.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 109.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, July 18, 1906.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 162 of the 20th ultimo, respecting the state of affairs at Shiraz.

I approve the terms of the notes which you addressed to the Grand Vizier and the Mushir-ed-Dowleh on the subject.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) EDWARD GREY.

[24614]

No. 54.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 19.)*

WITH reference to Sir A. Godley's letter of the 19th instant, the Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 19th instant, relative to Seistan affairs.

*India Office, July 19, 1906.*

[24616]

No. 53<sup>a</sup>.*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 19.)*

Sir,

*India Office, July 19, 1906.*

IN continuation of previous correspondence relative to the rioting in Seistan, ending with my covering letter of the 18th instant, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to inclose, for Sir E. Grey's consideration, a copy of a telegram from the Government of India, making certain proposals for securing the safety of His Majesty's Consulate.

They propose—

1. To increase the strength of the Consular escort up to that which has been accepted by the Persian Government for the Russian Consul's escort;

2. To bring up to Nasratabad a reserve of arms from the depôt at Robat;

3. To send with the arms an escort of fifty men from the force now stationed at Robat, as they consider that it would not be safe to intrust the arms to the small body of levies, which the Consul in Seistan has dispatched to Robat to fetch them (see his telegram of the 11th instant); and

4. To withdraw the escort when they have delivered the arms, leaving only enough men to raise the Consular escort to the required strength, provided that the reinforcements, which are understood to have been sent to Seistan by the Persian Government, prove to be intended to maintain order and capable of so doing.

It will be within Sir E. Grey's recollection that the Government of India were authorized in Mr. Morley's telegram of the 6th April to send the whole of the Robat force into Seistan if the situation should be critical. The measures now proposed by the Government of India would, no doubt, conduce to the safety of the Consulate. In view, however, of the objections to taking any action which would offend the susceptibilities of the Persian Government, Mr. Morley would be glad to be favoured with Sir E. Grey's views upon the present proposals.

With regard to the Robat-Seistan telegraph line, Sir E. Grey will recollect that in their telegram of the 12th instant the Government of India called attention to the delay which now necessarily occurs in telegraphic communications between Seistan and India.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

*Inclosure in No. 53<sup>a</sup>.**Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*July 18, 1906.*

SEISTAN. My telegram of the 11th July. Attack on Consulate.

We consider that, whatever may have been the motives of assailants, an attack on British Consulate at night time in a town where ferment was caused by plague rioters is so grave a development of situation that it calls not only for demand for punishment of all persons implicated, and for apology from Persian Government, but shows clearly that necessity has been established for placing our escort at same strength as that of Russians, and for storing within our Consulate such adequate reserve of ammunition and arms as were shown to be in possession of Russians at time of riots last spring.

Wisdom of sending arms with convoy of ten levies is questioned by our military authorities. We concur, and, to prevent risk of collision with mob or with customs official, we propose to send convoy composed of fifty men of double company under a British officer. When Persian troops arrive convoy would be withdrawn, such men only being retained as would give the British Consular escort a strength equal to that

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of the Russians, provided that the Persian troops showed that they are intended to maintain order and were capable of doing so. Until the situation quiets down the Chagai levies will remain at Nasratabad.

It should be borne in mind that in night attack on Consulate assailants only withdrew when guard fell in, and that, but for presence of escort and levies, therefore, lamentable consequences might have ensued. As regards telegraphic communication, we would point out that Russians possess five direct lines of telegraph across Persian frontier. Having regard to serious position of affairs, we would again press for completion of wire from Seistan to Robat.

(Repeated to Tehran, Seistan, and Meshed, through Robat).

*Inclosure in No. 54.*

*The Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

July 19, 1906.

MY telegram of the 18th instant. Seistan. We have received the following message from Dankes, dated 14th instant:—

"There has been no renewal of disturbance here. Persian official arrived here to-day on special mission to inquire into riots of March last. Incident reported in my telegram of the 11th July has been investigated by Deputy Governor, but he has failed as yet to obtain any clue as to identity of offenders. The city and Husseinabad are quiet, and the conviction that the recent attack on the Consulate was merely the handiwork of the ringleaders of the riots of last spring is expressed even by Mustanli, who is the Deputy Governor's right-hand man."

[25646]

No. 55.

*Question asked in the House of Commons, July 19, 1906.*

*Sir William Evans-Gordon*,—To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, considering the commercial importance and the magnitude of other interests involved in the Turco-Persian boundary dispute, and that England is one of the mediating Powers under the Erzeroum Treaty of 1847, His Majesty's Government intend to watch the progress of the Passova boundary dispute.

*Answer.*

His Majesty's Government have from the first given their attention to the question of the Turco-Persian frontier, and will continue to do so.

[24740]

No. 56.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey*.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 191.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 20, 1906.

TEHRAN disturbances.

Some fifty merchants and Mollahs have taken asylum at British Legation in Tehran, complaining of oppression. I am in communication with Persian Government on the subject. It is probable that more will come in the course of the next few days.

[24824]

No. 57.

*India Office to Foreign Office*.—(Received July 21.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 19th instant, relative to the Turco-Persian frontier dispute.

*India Office, July 21, 1906.*



Inclosure in No. 57.

*Mr. Morley to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*India Office, July 19, 1906.*

RUSSIAN Ambassador has suggested to Sir E. Grey, with reference to the question of the Turco-Persian frontier, that British and Russian Ambassadors at Constantinople should co-operate in making representations to the Turkish Government against their concentration of troops, and their attitude of aggression. Sir N. O'Connor has been instructed accordingly. Instructions have also been sent to Mr. Grant Duff that, in order to insure the maintenance of a prudent attitude by Persian Government, he should join with the Russian Minister in making representations on the subject.

[24823]

No. 58.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 21.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 20th instant, relative to the affairs of Seistan.

*India Office, July 21, 1906.*

Inclosure in No. 58.

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*July 20, 1906.*

SEISTAN. We have received following message, dated the 16th instant, from His Majesty's Consul, Nasratbad :—

"I am informed by Officer in Command of detachment at Robat that, without express orders of Government, he cannot forward reserve ammunition and arms. My request that it should be forwarded here was based on assumption that discretion had been allowed to His Majesty's Consul, Seistan, in the matter, under terms of Viceroy's telegram to Secretary of State of the 16th April and your telegram of the 24th May last to Consul, Seistan. Want of reserve of arms and ammunition having been sent to Robat indicates that their requirement here was recognized. (See telegram from Viceroy to Secretary of State of the 9th September, 1905.)

"I venture to give following reasons for believing present moment to be particularly favourable for their importation :—

"1. If the new Persian official who has arrived here takes energetic action, an agitation may possibly be worked up against us by the ringleaders of the riots of last spring, some of whom are persons of influence, since it is well known that the course followed by the Persian Government in instituting an inquiry into the affair is due to our bringing pressure to bear on them. Though not in itself very serious, the disturbance of the 10th instant, reported in my telegram of the 11th instant, shows the power of the ringleaders to bring about further agitation against us. Consulate, in such a contingency, might stand in need of reserve of arms and ammunition.

"2. I do not think that our action in supplying Consulate with reserve of arms and ammunition could be considered altogether without justification, when it is borne in mind that the Persian Government have as yet taken no steps to punish those who took part in the riots of last spring; that another disturbance, probably instigated by the same persons, has occurred; and that in the present condition of affairs there exists some possibility of further trouble. No question, moreover, could be raised if the arms and ammunition are imported without attracting attention, which I think will be possible."

[24838]

No. 59.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 21.)*

(No. 192.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 21, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances. My immediately preceding telegram.

Refugees at His Majesty's Legation, who by yesterday evening had increased to 700, are behaving in an orderly manner; but the garden may be damaged, and their presence is undesirable for sanitary reasons.

Mushir-ed-Dowleh states that my note has been laid before the Shah, and he promises an answer to-day.

If Persian Government refuse to give satisfaction to just grievances of people, I beg for instructions regarding further action.

I have received a message from Valiabad, through Mr. Wratislaw, requesting me to give the refugees protection.

Possibility of people taking asylum was duly impressed upon the Persian Government.

[24978]

No. 60.

*Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 23.)*

(No. 480.)

Sir,

*Therapia, July 13, 1906.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 433, Very Confidential, of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to report that the Persian Ambassador told me to-day that the representations which I made to the Grand Vizier towards the end of last month, and which I renewed on the 2nd instant, in the interests of a peaceful settlement of the Turco-Persian frontier dispute in the Lahidjan district, had been reported by his Highness to the Sultan, and that a message in a sense similar to my representations had been sent by the Russian Ambassador to His Imperial Majesty through Ghalib Pasha, the Master of Ceremonies. In consequence of our joint action, the Sultan had issued an Irade directing the Ottoman Commissioner, Zekki Pasha, to proceed to Passova without delay, and to come to an arrangement with the Persian Commissioners with a view to prevent a conflict. The Grand Vizier also told the Persian Ambassador that he was authorized to give an official assurance that it was the earnest desire of the Porte to avoid hostilities, and that his Excellency might confidently await a peaceful settlement of the question.

The Grand Vizier said, however, at the same time that personally he did not believe that Zekki Pasha has any power to come to any definite settlement, and that if the Commissioners failed to arrive at an understanding the only course left open to Persia was to appeal to the arbitration of Great Britain and Russia.

I asked Prince Mirza Riza Khan whether the Grand Vizier had given him any reason to suppose that the Porte would accept arbitration if proposed by the Government of the Shah, and he replied that, Ferid Pasha having been silent on this point, he could not say what the attitude of the Ottoman Government would be in such an eventuality. The latest information which had reached him was by no means reassuring of the pacific intentions of Turkey, and he begged me earnestly to renew my representations to the Porte in favour of an amicable settlement. I readily promised to do so, particularly as I had just learnt that 3,420 Mauser rifles and a million cartridges have recently been sent from Mosul to Vazné, and part, if not the whole, of these rifles have been given to Sadik Pasha for distribution among his clansmen.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[24914]

No. 61.

*Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 23.)*

(No. 108.)

Sir,

*La Panne, July 19, 1906.*

SINCE I had the honour to receive your telegrams Nos. 14 and 15 of the 13th instant, I have endeavoured to ascertain confidentially through Messrs. Rothschild's agents whether any confirmation can be obtained here of the rumoured negotiations for a Persian loan. I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a letter just received by me from Baron Lambert, from which you will observe that nothing is known on the subject in the financial world of Brussels.

At the same time I think it quite possible that overtures, probably of a very secret character, have been made by M. Naus to Belgian friends, and may have been discussed by them at the Persian Legation. I need not allude to the circumstances which render it imperative for the Ain-ed-Dowleh to obtain money, if he is either to maintain his position during the Shah's lifetime or secure himself after His Majesty's death from the vengeance of a hostile successor, and, as he has failed to obtain it from us or the Russians, he will doubtless make a supreme effort to do so in some other quarter.

M. Naus has often told me that Belgian capitalists (he mentioned to me, I remember, amongst others, a M. Van Kerkhoven) had sounded him as to the prospects of openings in Persia. I always think that he had some idea of a Belgian or international Syndicate, in which Dutch or Belgian financiers would be interested, undertaking the Karun irrigation scheme. A year ago he mentioned to me, and the report was confirmed from other sources, that an enormous sum had been offered to the Shah by a group, which, though nominally American, appears to have been really German, in return for the promise of a Railway Concession. At that time he still hoped for the English loan, which Lord Lansdowne and Lord Curzon had promised to give in return for a pledge that no Concession would be granted to any foreigners south of the line Kermanshah-Ispahan-Yezd-Seistan, and which would from his personal point of view have been the simplest way out of the difficulty. He therefore, I believe, declined, on the ground of the Russo-Persian Railway Agreement, to have anything to do with the project.

The language of Mirza Hassan Khan reported in my despatch No. 103 of the 10th instant led me, however, to suspect at the time that the Persian Government, standing as it does at bay, might be making an endeavour to raise money in Belgium or Germany, and that the Moayyed-es-Sultaneh, who has been employed in previous loan negotiations, and who has this in common with the Ain-ed-Dowleh that they both detest the late Sadrazam, might, on the strength of his long European experience as Persian Minister at Berlin, have been intrusted with some such mission. Mirza Hassan Khan's remarks to me about possible Railway and Petroleum Concessions in regard to which he had been sounded, taken in conjunction with repeated rumours of applications for such Concessions as conditions of a German loan, with the increased interest shown by Germany in Persian affairs, with inquiries made by the Persian Government as to our willingness to relinquish our rights of control over the Tehran-Khanikin-Bagdad telegraph line, with the warning addressed to Sir Cecil Spring-Rice by the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg, and with the Ain-ed-Dowleh's own statement to Mr. Grant Duff that as Russia and England would not help her Persia must turn elsewhere, all combine to suggest an impression that the Persian Government is feeling its way to financial assistance from Germany, and that the position and Belgian relations of M. Naus, who has been at Constantinople in close touch with M. Stenrich, may enable this assistance to be disguised as Belgian and therefore "non-political," and to be negotiated in Europe through Belgian agencies.

To what extent the German Government would be likely to fall in with such a scheme is another question, on which I am not of course qualified to speak. Economically Persia is valueless to Germany; she is, however, valuable as a bone of contention between Russia and ourselves, and as a means of preventing an Anglo-Russian *entente* in Asia. I gather that a struggle is proceeding at St. Petersburg between progressive forces friendly to England and reactionary forces disposed to lean on Germany, that the latter have the sympathy of the Empress, of the military party, and to some extent of M. Isvolsky, and that the issue of the conflict is still doubtful. The question of Persia will certainly prove a factor of some importance in it. If Germany were to propose as part of a wider plan a Russo-German in lieu of a

Russo-English *entente* about Persia, which would admit of a recognition of Russian influence on the shores of the Indian Ocean in return for a recognition of German influence in Mesopotamia, in Arabistan, and along the Euphrates as far as Mohammerah, and a common policy on these lines, in opposition to England, at Tehran, it appears to me conceivable that such an offer might present certain attractions to powerful Anglophobe elements in St. Petersburg and might at least serve to obstruct that Anglo-Russian agreement respecting Asia which is naturally dreaded at Berlin. From this point of view the creation and assertion of some concrete German interest in Persia would be important.

I do not believe that the financial assistance which Persia might obtain from Belgium or, through nominally Belgian agencies, from Germany would take the form of a regular loan secured on existing Persian revenues. Our own Financial Agreements and those of Russia with the Persian Government, and the fact that the Customs, both Northern and Southern, are already heavily pledged to Russian and British creditors, stand in the way of any such transaction. But a large advance might be made by Belgian or German capitalists in return for a Concession, to be realized when the Railway Agreement expires three years hence, of an extension of the Bagdad Railway from Khanikin to Tehran (the only Persian line which would, in my opinion, pay), or for other monopolies or advantages in the Shah's dominions. These might first be given to a Belgian Syndicate, which would later on find it convenient to fuse its interests with those of the Bagdad Railway or the "Deutsche Bank," the owner of the petroleum monopoly in Irak Arabi.

On the other hand, there is always the possibility that the Persian Government may itself try to spread these rumours with a view to alarming the Russians and ourselves, and thus untying our purse strings.

It would probably not be very difficult to prevent a loan being made in Belgium to the Persian Government. If the British and Russian Legations were to intimate to the Belgian Premier and Finance Minister that such a loan was disliked by their Governments on political grounds and was likely to lead to political complications, he might be induced to use his influence with the Belgian capitalists concerned to prevent its being made. Communications to the Belgian press, pointing out the dangers of such an operation in view of Persia's financial position and her financial relations with other Powers, would probably also prove effective. The secret sale of a Concession would no doubt be more difficult to check, but might also be obstructed by joint action here if such action were taken in time. Earlier efforts of the Persian Government in the time of the Emin-ed-Dowleh to raise money in France and Holland were defeated by tactics such as those mentioned above on the part of the Russian Government.

It is scarcely possible for either my Russian colleague or myself, without further data, to verify in a large mercantile centre like Brussels, where His Majesty's Legation has no Secret Intelligence Department, the real facts as to these alleged negotiations, but I will keep the matter in mind and report any indications of its being serious which I may be able to discover. If you think it sufficiently important to authorize me to do so, I could confer on it with M. de Giers.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 61.

*Baron Lambert to Sir A. Hardinge.*

Dear Sir Arthur,

[Undated.]

AS I telegraphed to you from Ostend yesterday, I have not heard a word about the proposed Persian loan you mentioned, and I would be very much surprised if a scheme of that sort had any chance of success in this country.

You know that the Belgians have been extremely unlucky with their investments in Persia, and have lost a big sum of money in different undertakings in which they were induced to take shares by our former Minister, then Baron d'Eros.

I saw several people to-day; no one knows anything about a Persian loan.

I remain, &amp;c.

(Signed) LAMBERT.



[25173]

No. 62.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 23.)*

(No. 193.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 23, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances.

There is no change in the situation. I informed the refugees yesterday of the futile answer of the Persian Government. They have refused to accept it, and will write to me, giving their objections.

Their chief demands are as follows: (1) Fall of Grand Vizier; (2) Establishment of Law Courts; (3) Return of Mollahs, without whom no business can be transacted.

It is certain that refugees, who are respectable and orderly, have the sympathy of all people, not only in Tehran, but throughout the provinces.

I am informed that Mollahs, who have just reached Kum, have sent messages to all the chief towns in Persia, in order to cause disturbances throughout the country.

The action proposed in my telegram No. 161 of the 16th ultimo alone is likely to prove effectual. Temporary order, at any rate, would be re-established on dismissal of Grand Vizier and return of Mollahs.

Our position in Persia will, in my opinion, be greatly strengthened if we take the energetic action which the occasion requires.

[25286]

No. 63.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 24.)*

(No. 194.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 24, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances.

There were 2,000 refugees in Legation last night. Up to the present moment there has been no disturbance. I am confidentially informed by Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Grand Vizier intends to force people to leave Legation by persecuting their families. His Majesty's Government will, I trust, not permit such a proceeding.

Reason for not going also to Russian Legation is stated by leaders to be that Russians cannot assist Persians if they are unable to gain their own liberty.

Several women, amongst whom are the wives of important Mollahs, wish to take refuge at Legation, but I will prevent this, if possible.

[25310]

No. 64.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 24.)*

(No. 195.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 24, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances.

Number of refugees has now reached 5,000. Notwithstanding my repeated representations, Persian Government have taken no action, as far as I am aware. Whole population will come to Legation if some steps are not taken, and I cannot answer for the consequences. The shopkeepers are streaming in, and the bazaars are closed.

[25310]

No. 65.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 118.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, July 24, 1906.*

I TOLD the Persian Chargé d'Affaires to-day that we had very serious news from Tehran. As many as 5,000 persons had taken refuge in the British Legation. This was a very grave matter.

I was not personally acquainted with the exact nature of the grievances of these people, but they were no doubt well known to the Persian Government. I assumed that this step on their part was an expression of general dissatisfaction with the

Ministers of the Shah, or at least some of them. I asked the Chargé d'Affaires to telegraph to his Government to ask them to redress the grievances of their subjects, or to meet their demands in such a way as to enable them to withdraw from the Legation.

The Chargé d'Affaires said he had just received a long cypher telegram from the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs which had not yet been decyphered, and he proposed to come again to-morrow when he knew what its contents were.

I said I should be glad if he would do this, but meanwhile I hoped he would telegraph what I had said to the Persian Government.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) EDWARD GREY.

[24616]

No. 66.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, July 24, 1906.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, relative to the recent rioting in Seistan and the proposals made by the Government of India to secure the safety of His Majesty's Consulate.

Sir E. Grey concurs that the strength of the Consular escort should be raised to thirty men, the number of the escort attached to the Russian Consul. He would, however, point out, for Mr. Morley's consideration, that the twenty-three levies sent to protect the Consulate last spring are still at Nasratabad, and that, if and when the Persian reinforcements arrive and the authorities are once more in a position to cope with the rioters and to maintain security, these men might well be withdrawn. Their presence might otherwise serve as an excuse for a corresponding increase in the Russian escort.

As regards the supply of arms and ammunition for His Majesty's Consulate, Sir E. Grey agrees that they should be sent to Nasratabad as soon as possible. He sees, however, no reason to modify the views expressed in my letter of the 15th May last regarding the entry of British troops into Persia. He would deprecate this step, unless absolutely necessary, for the protection of His Majesty's Consul, as likely to offend Persian and Russian susceptibilities, to form an undesirable precedent for similar action on the part of Russia in the future, to provoke local animosity, and to diminish the responsibility of the Persian authorities for the maintenance of security and order. He would therefore suggest, for Mr. Morley's consideration, that the arms should, if possible, be introduced under the escort of levies, whose movements on the frontier do not attract undue attention, to whom might be attached the ten sowars to be added to the Consular escort.

As regards the telegraph extension to Seistan, Sir E. Grey is disposed to think that as Mr. Grant Duff has received the Viceroy's telegrams and is well aware of the views of His Majesty's Government on the subject it is not necessary to send him further instructions.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GORST.

[25413]

No. 67.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 25.)*

(No. 196.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 25, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances.

I earnestly request that answer may be sent to my telegrams on this subject. Our position here will be gravely affected if people leave British Legation for Russian Legation, who are endeavouring to bring this about. It is possible also that people may wreck Legation if they become angry.

Though there is no disorder as yet, bazaars are still shut.



[25310]

No. 68.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 99.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, July 25, 1906.*

SITUATION in Tehran: Your telegrams Nos. 194 and 195 of the 24th July.

Yesterday I informed the Persian Chargé d'Affaires, whom I had sent for, of the serious state of affairs, and begged him to ask the Persian Government by telegraph to enable their subjects to leave His Majesty's Legation, by redressing their grievances or meeting their demands in such a way as to effect that object.

[25491]

No. 69.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 100.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, July 25, 1906.*

SITUATION in Tehran.

You should press upon the Persian Government that it is for them to put an end to this very undesirable state of affairs by satisfying the people.

In a telegram which their Chargé d'Affaires has communicated they point out that they have done what they can to meet the demands of the persons now at our Legation, that they have promised not to interfere with their lives or property, and that there are Mollahs left in Tehran. I stated, in reply, that we cannot persuade the refugees to leave the Legation till they are satisfied, and that it is for the Persian Government to redress the grievances of which they complain, and to inspire them with confidence that this will be done.

Although I have not pressed any definite step on the Persian Government, I have suggested that lack of confidence in the Grand Vizier may be the real complaint.

[25554]

No. 70.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 26.)*

(No. 197.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 26, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances.

Persian Government have taken no steps to satisfy demands of refugees, who now number 8,500. Religious and legal functions must be performed by Mollahs of standing, all of whom have left Tehran. People refuse to use services of the few discredited Mollahs who remain. Mr. Wyatlaw reports from Tabreez that Mollahs there threaten to close all mosques, and have sent a telegram, through me, to the Shah, with the Valiahd's approval.

There will be a reception of the Corps Diplomatique on the 5th proximo, the Shah's birthday. Should I attend it, if refugees still remain at Legation?

I trust that I have in my despatches made clear to His Majesty's Government the gravity of the general situation in Persia, and the gradual spread of the spirit of unrest now prevalent in Russia to this country.

The situation is, in my opinion, so critical that, unless I receive instructions to the contrary, I shall on Saturday next request an audience of the Shah, who does not probably realize true position of affairs, and lay question of refugees before His Majesty.

My constant interviews with Mushir-ed-Dowleh have produced no effect whatever.

[25651]

No. 71<sup>a</sup>.*Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 27.)*

(No. 115 A.)

(Paraphrase of Despatch.)

Sir,

*Brussels, July 26, 1906.*

BELGIAN loan to Persia. See my telegram No. 5 of the 14th instant.

M. Ampain, a well-known capitalist here, has just received from M. Naus a proposal which, in the present state of Persia and Russia, it seems premature to entertain, inviting him to negotiate a loan of 2,000,000L to the Persian Government. It is to be secured with the authorization and guarantee of the Russian Government, which M. Naus says he can obtain on the customs.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

[25554]

No. 71.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 101.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, July 26, 1906.*

SITUATION in Tehran: Your telegram No. 197 of to-day.

You are authorized to ask for an audience of the Shah, and to use the same language to him as is contained in my telegram No. 100 of yesterday.

There is no reason why you should not attend the reception on His Majesty's birthday.

[25683]

No. 72.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 27.)*

(No. 199.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 27, 1906.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier dispute.

Your telegram No. 96 of the 16th July. I have carried out your instructions.

It is suggested by the Russian Minister that orders should be sent by the Porte to the Turkish Ambassador here to adopt a more conciliatory attitude.

The Commissioners of the two Powers have met, and the discussion of the frontier question is said to have commenced.

[25684]

No. 73.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 27.)*

(No. 200.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 27, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances.

I have applied for audience, as instructed in your telegram No. 101.

The refugees in the Legation are orderly, but determined, and now number about 10,000.

All business is still suspended in Tehran.

[25842]

No. 74.

*Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 30.)*

(No. 495.)

Sir,

*Therapia, July 21, 1906.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 480 of the 13th instant and to your telegram No. 108 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to report that having heard from His Majesty's Consulate-General at Bagdad that more arms and ammunition were being sent to the Passova district, I again on the 16th instant called the serious attention of the Sublime Porte to this persistent military concentration, and especially to the report of arms being distributed in considerable quantities to Sheikh Mohammed Sadik's tribe.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires, who had called upon me on the 15th instant, told me that Count Benckendorff had been instructed to approach you with a view to joint representations to the Porte on the subject, and I informed him of the fresh representations which I proposed making next day, and told him that my general instructions enabled me fully to co-operate with him in any representations he might make deprecating the aggressive policy of the Ottoman Government in those parts.

I had, as you are aware, spoken to the Porte a short time previously to the same effect, and pointed out the serious and far-reaching effect of a conflagration provoked by their inexplicable and apparently bellicose policy. These representations were duly reported to the Palace, and on the 17th instant the Persian Ambassador sent me a message through Mr. Lamb to the effect that he had the previous day received a visit from Ghadib Bey, the Acting Grand Master of the Ceremonies, who came on the part of the Sultan to express His Majesty's surprise that Persia should have adopted a hostile and aggressive attitude towards his Empire, and that his Highness himself, whom the Sultan had always treated with the greatest consideration, should not have

used his influence with his own Government to prevent matters from arriving at their present state.

Mirza Riza Khan replied that, so far from having adopted an aggressive attitude, the Persian Government, largely owing to his representations, had shown extraordinary patience in face of unprovoked aggression on the part of the Turkish military authorities, who had occupied without the slightest justification territory which was undoubtedly Persian. After recapitulating the history of the frontier dispute from the Treaty of Erzeroum down to the present time, he begged the Sultan to adopt one of two alternatives: either to appoint a Commission at the Palace composed of men in whom His Majesty had confidence, but excluding Izzet Pasha, whom he accused of being the principal cause of the frontier dispute, and allow him to discuss the whole question directly with this Commission; or else to refer the matter to the arbitration of England, or England and Russia, in accordance with the Convention of 1869.

Ghalib Bey took careful note of his statement, and he hoped that his report would reach the Sultan in time to strengthen the effect which would have been produced by my own representations to the Porte.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

P.S.—I should add that the Grand Vizier denied that there was any intention of sending arms to Sheikh Mohammed Sadik, or of distributing them among any section of the population in those regions.

N. R. O'C.

[25918]

No. 75.

*Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 30.)*

(No. 116. Secret.)

Sir,

*Antwerp, July 27, 1906.*

THE information which I had the honour to telegraph to you yesterday from Brussels respecting the Persian loan question was derived by me from Messrs. Rothschild's agent, to whom M. Naus' letter had been shown, but who requested me to treat the news as strictly confidential, and even secret. M. Ampain, the Belgian capitalist, to whom M. Naus' overtures were made through a common friend, is perhaps known to you, and I should think certainly to Sir Eldon Gorst, as a man who, starting from very modest beginnings, has made a large fortune, mainly, I believe, in Egyptian enterprises.

The amount of the loan asked for by the Persian Government was stated by Baron Lambert to be 2,000,000 roubles, secured on the customs of Persia, exclusive, presumably, of those of the Gulf and Fars, and M. Naus expressed confidence that it would be guaranteed by the Russian Government.

Since I saw Baron Lambert I have noticed in the Confidential print received by me yesterday a report of a conversation on the subject of an alleged Russian loan of 2,000,000*l.* between His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg and M. Isvolsky. I have little doubt that the rumours which Sir Arthur Nicolson repeated to his Excellency were based on news from Tehran respecting these efforts by M. Naus, and I think it likely that the Manager of the Russian Bank in Persia may have offered to submit and recommend the proposal to his Government, and thus encouraged the hopes of the Persians.

I need hardly observe that, in the present state of Persia and Russia, a loan to the one, even with the guarantee of the other, would have no attractions from a business point of view, and I should think it unlikely that such a man as M. Ampain would look at it.

So far as I know, there were no conditions, political or otherwise, attaching to the loan, M. Naus' proposal being rather in the nature of a feeler than of a cut-and-dried scheme.

I have thought it better to say nothing, until authorized by yourself, to my Russian colleague about these matters; but I may mention that the French Minister, in the course of a conversation in which he referred to M. DeFrance, my late French colleague at Tehran, alluded to the disturbed state of Persia, and thus gave me an opportunity of asking casually if he had heard any rumours respecting the negotiation here of a new Persian loan. M. Gérard had evidently received copies of a report from Tehran,

somewhat like that telegraphed by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires there, but he had, he said, failed to elicit any confirmation of these rumours, though he had made inquiries on the subject of several well-informed Persian business houses in Brussels.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

[25830]

No. 76.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 30.)*

(No. 201.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 30, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances.

Refugees now number about 12,000.

Mushir-ed-Dowleh leaves Tehran to-day for Kum, bearing an autograph letter from the Shah, granting:—

1. Courts of Justice.
2. A National Assembly.
3. Return of Mollahs from Kum with all honours.
4. Pensions for relatives of those killed in the recent riots.
5. Permission for those exiled for their connection with the reform movement to live anywhere in Persia, with the exception of Tehran.

The Shah has begged me, in view of these concessions, to postpone audience until the result of the Mushir-ed-Dowleh's mission to Kum be known.

The refugees should be satisfied with the above concessions, if the Persian Government is playing fair.

My audience was fixed for to-morrow morning, but I have consented to delay it, and trust that my action will meet with your approval in the circumstances.

His Majesty's Government doubtless appreciate the fact that any satisfactory solution of the present difficulty will have an immense effect on our influence in this country.

[25989]

No. 77.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 30.)*

(No. 202.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 30, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances.

My telegram No. 201 of to-day.

The Shah has accepted the Grand Vizier's resignation.

There is now some hope of a settlement, though the situation at the Legation remains so far unchanged.

[26081]

No. 78.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 30.)*

(No. 203.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, July 30, 1906.*

OFFICE of Chief Minister has been conferred on Mushir-ed-Dowleh, but he has not so far been created Grand Vizier. It was his Excellency who gave me the information contained in my telegram No. 201, but he will now not proceed to Kum. Another official will be intrusted with the mission. It is not yet clear what instructions will be given to him.



[25651]

No. 79.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 103.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, July 31, 1906.*

WITH reference to the telegram No. 115 A from Sir A. Hardinge, it would not be advisable to mention the question of a Persian loan to the Persian Government until you have information that any such proposal is being seriously entertained.

The securities by which British loans are guaranteed must of course be unimpaired.

[26306]

No. 80.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 1.)*

(No. 173.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, August 1, 1906.*

M. IZVOLSKI spoke to me at his reception this afternoon with regard to Persian affairs. He considers the situation at Tehran alarming. He made especial allusion to the number of refugees now congregated in the British Legation, and was anxious to know what had led to their presence there. I explained the matter, saying that in Persia it was the custom for refugees—political and other—to take sanctuary occasionally in mosques or foreign legations, though I had never before known this course adopted by so large a number. He inquired whether any encouragement had been given them, to which I replied decidedly in the negative, adding that it was a most embarrassing state of things for our Chargé d'Affaires, who would, I had no doubt, be glad to be rid of the refugees. He said that he had instructed the Russian Ambassador to speak to you on the subject, and he thought it was a matter of common interest to our two countries. I asked him if he had any suggestions to offer, but he replied that he had none. I should be glad to be informed of any instructions that may be sent to Mr. Grant Duff, as it is possible that M. Izvolski will refer to the subject again.

[26312]

No. 81.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 1.)*

(No. 205.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 1, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances.

My telegram No. 203 of the 30th ultimo.

Mushir-ed-Dowleh, while retaining Ministry for Foreign Affairs, has been appointed Grand Vizier.

The official who was specially sent to Kum to bring back the Mollahs should have arrived there yesterday. The Mollahs will probably refuse to come unless they obtain some guarantee for the fulfilment of the concessions enumerated in my telegram No. 201.

The difficulty of the situation is that up to the present the 12,000 refugees in the Legation positively decline to negotiate with the Persian Government except through me. The Persian Government, they say, has already deceived them once, and now they must have some security.

I have so far done my utmost not to mix myself up in the dispute, but the continuance of this policy may soon be rendered impossible.

If the refugees persist in refusing to enter into direct negotiations with the Persian Government, a possible settlement might be arrived at if the Persian Government would address a note to me, informing me that certain concessions had been graciously granted by the Shah to his subjects. I might also inform the refugees that the door of His Majesty's Legation would still be open to them if the promises of the Persian Government are not carried out within a reasonable time.

[26445]

No. 82.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 2.)*

(No. 206.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 2, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances.

I yesterday visited the refugees at His Majesty's Legation, who now number 14,000, and discussed the situation with their leaders. They refuse to accept any promise which the Shah may make unless accompanied by a guarantee for its fulfilment from His Majesty's Government. They state that they will not give way even if the Mollahs at Kum do. With the exception of the trees, the garden is practically destroyed, though the people are good-tempered and orderly.

I informed the Mushir-ed-Dowleh privately to-day that I must again ask for an audience unless he could give me a definite assurance that the people would be induced to leave the Legation.

I made a vain attempt, at the Mushir-ed-Dowleh's request, to induce the refugees to send a deputation to the Shah.

The guilds only admit respectable people to the Legation, and hundreds have been turned away.

(Secret.)

I am informed that the police and soldiers are threatening to join the refugees in the Legation.

[26312]

No. 83.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 104.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, August 2, 1906.*

YOUR telegram No. 205 of yesterday respecting the state of affairs in Tehran.

Although, in accordance with custom, we have allowed the people to take refuge in the Legation, we cannot interfere between them and their Government. His Majesty's Government cannot mix themselves up in the political movement for reforms in Persia, or undertake responsibility for the conduct of the Persian Government.

You should do what you can to persuade the refugees, whose action has apparently already secured the change of Grand Vizier, to leave the Legation.

[26445]

No. 84.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 105.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, August 3, 1906.*

SITUATION in Tehran (see your telegram No. 206 of yesterday).

His Majesty's Government will not interfere in the internal affairs of Persia. The Persian Government is independent, and we cannot give guarantees for it. You must explain this to the refugees.

[26986]

No. 85.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 364.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, August 3, 1906.*

I TOLD M. Poklevski, who came to see me to-day as Count Benckendorff was away, that there were 14,000 refugees in the British Legation at Tehran, and I understood that, by the custom of Persia, it was impossible to refuse admission to Persians who wished to take refuge when they had grievances against their Government.

M. Poklevski asked whether one of the demands of these people had not been the dismissal of the Grand Vizier, and, if so, whether they would not leave now this had been accomplished.

[1660]

R

I said that when I heard of the dismissal of the Grand Vizier I had hoped the people would leave, but they demanded a guarantee from us that the promises of the Persian Government would be kept. I had sent direct instructions to Mr. Grant Duff that we could not give any such guarantee because we should then be interfering in the internal affairs of Persia. We had no intention of doing this, and I had said this must be explained to the refugees.

M. Poklevski said the Russian Minister at Tehran had been afraid that Mr. Grant Duff was promising some protection to these people, who did not all, he thought, belong to the reform party.

I said we had never had any idea of undertaking anything of the kind, and it was for that reason we had refused to give any guarantee.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) EDWARD GREY.

[26945]

No. 86.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)*

(No. 207.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 4, 1906.

THE Grand Vizier's son yesterday visited the Legation, and read in my presence Proclamations signed by the Shah, granting:—

1. The formation of a Consultative Assembly, representing Princes, landed proprietors, Mollahs, and merchants.
2. Pardon of persons expelled for agitating.
3. Compensation to the relatives of those killed and wounded in the riots.
4. General amnesty for the refugees in Legation.
5. Return of the Mollahs from Kum.

I informed the leaders, at the request of the Grand Vizier's son, that I could do nothing more for them. I also telegraphed, at his request, to the chief Mollah at Kum, urging him to come back to Tehran.

I declined to give any guarantee for the execution of the promises contained in the Shah's Proclamations. It is uncertain whether the leaders will accept the concessions.

[26740]

No. 87.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 7.)*

(No. 180.)

Sir,

Gulshah, July 11, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to report that the German Chargé d'Affaires informs me that the Persian Government have granted a further sum of 4,000 tomans (about 700*l.*) a year towards the upkeep of the German hospital in Tehran, and that a second German doctor will shortly arrive to assist in its management. The Shah has also given a house for the German school which is about to be started, and three teachers are expected in the autumn.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[26742]

No. 88.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 7.)*

(No. 182.)

Sir,

Gulshah, July 15, 1906.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 167 of the 21st ultimo, and to my telegrams Nos. 179 and 182 of the 12th and 13th instant respectively, I have the honour to report that the Shah's departure for the country on the 23rd June caused a momentary lull in the agitation of the clerical party against the Government. This period of

calm lasted until the first week in July, when the principal Mujtehed began preaching in the mosques against the Grand Vizier and inciting the people to revolt.

The Grand Vizier recently issued orders for the arrest of a certain well-known preacher who had given offence by the violence of his sermons. The preacher, who is an elderly man, was arrested on the 11th instant and taken to a guard-house in the neighbourhood of the residence of Agha Seyyed Abdullah, the chief Mujtehed. A woman who was passing by reported the arrest to the people assembled at a mosque. Immediately some thirty or forty students proceeded to the guard-house and attempted to rescue the prisoner. The Sultan commanding the guard ordered his men to fire, but as none of them seemed inclined to obey he took a rifle and fired point-blank at a Seyyed, killing him on the spot. The students then tried to rush the guard-house, and four volleys were fired by the soldiers, wounding a number of the attacking party. After a short fight the students routed the soldiers and wrecked the guard-house. The body of the Seyyed was taken to a neighbouring mosque, where a large crowd collected, and messengers were sent to the principal Mujtehed, who shortly arrived with a large following.

The Mujtehed Seyyed Muhammed, on hearing the news, went to the mosque with his followers in "kefen," or winding sheets, which are assumed on such occasions to show that the wearers are ready to fight to the death. The whole company then proceeded to the Mesjed Jumah, whither the corpse was subsequently carried in procession. Large numbers of women then collected, and, clad in winding sheets, paraded the bazaars beating their breasts, shrieking, and wildly abusing the soldiers. Troops were sent by the Government to prevent the people from closing their shops, but without avail. The Mollahs sent criers into the bazaars to entreat the people not to loot, and to state that the butchers and bakers were to continue to work.

Later in the day the Grand Vizier, the Naib-es-Sultaneh (Commander-in-chief), and other Ministers went to Tehran escorted by a large body of cavalry. A council was at once held at the Palace, and apparently it was decided to use force and also, as far as possible, to localize the disturbances. Troops were accordingly picketed all through the bazaars. The Shah, who was no doubt kept in ignorance of the true facts, and especially of the death of the Seyyed, issued a Proclamation to the Mollahs expressing his disapproval of the agitation and asking the clerical party to formulate their grievances. His Majesty promised to remedy just grievances, but declined positively to dismiss the Grand Vizier.

Thursday, the 12th instant, did not bring any change in the situation, and the shops remained closed, great crowds of people filling the Masjid Jumah.

On the 13th instant a serious incident occurred. The crowds which had collected in and around the great mosque were so large that all circulation in the neighbourhood ceased. About 10 A.M. a number of people began beating their breasts and shouting "Hassan! Hussein!" They surrounded a pole bearing the blood-stained shirt of the Seyyed who had been killed on the previous Wednesday. Seyyed Abdullah endeavoured to calm them, but his efforts were of no avail. A procession was formed with the object of parading the Seyyed's shirt in the bazaars. The soldiers tried to stop the procession, and, finding it impossible without using force to prevent the advance of the mob, the officer in command gave the order to fire. About a dozen people were killed, including a well-known "pish-namaz" (leader of prayer) named Seyyed Mustafa and several other Seyyeds. A scene of great confusion followed, and some soldiers were certainly killed both on this occasion and on the 14th instant, but accounts greatly vary as to the number.

On the evening of the 13th Seyyed Abdullah ascended the pulpit and read the Shah's "dastkhatt" to the people, saying that his demands for justice had been met by a volley of bullets. Holding up the Koran, he enjoined them to maintain order and on the morrow to open their shops.

During the whole of yesterday negotiations were passing between the Government and the Mollahs, the principal demands of the clerical party being the dismissal of the Grand Vizier. As I write I hear that the chief Mujtehed is still in the Masjid Jumah, all access to them being barred by troops. The shops have again been closed by order of the Mollahs.

I am informed that the Custom-house and Persian telegraph office are closed, the latter no doubt with the object of preventing news of the riots in the capital from reaching the provinces.

It is difficult to believe that the Grand Vizier can keep office after acquiescing in the killing of several Seyyeds; but the state of affairs here now is so abnormal



that it is difficult to foresee what may happen if his Highness continues to oppose all reform.

The European quarter is quiet, and I have as yet had no reports of inconvenience being caused by the agitators to either foreigners or Armenians.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[26743]

No. 89.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 7.)*

(No. 133.)

Sir,

*Gulabek, July 15, 1906.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 182 of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz regarding the recent agitation in that town. I have not thought it necessary to send you the long list, inclosed in Mr. Grahame's despatch, of the grievances of the people of Fars. I showed it to the Chief of the British section of the Persian Foreign Office, and after carefully reading it through he expressed surprise at its extreme moderation.

The Musfir-el-Dowleh, after some delay, sent me an official note stating that the new Governor-General of Fars had received full powers to redress the grievances of the people of that province. I had already telegraphed to Mr. Grahame to that effect.

Eventually the crowd at His Majesty's Consulate, amounting at times to nearly 1,000 persons, dispersed on the 22nd ultimo. The Ala-ed-Dowleh, travelling at a rate hitherto unknown among Persian Governors proceeding to their posts, reached Shiraz on the 4th instant, and since then I have not heard of any fresh disturbances.

The significant feature of the incident appears to me to be that although several hundred Persian subjects entered and remained for several days in one of His Majesty's Consulates, no real effort was made by the Shah's Government to cause them to withdraw. The telegrams sent by the Grand Vizier to the principal refugees were I hear received, on being read, with loud laughter and insulting remarks. It is I think a fair deduction that, had the crowd been hostile and Mr. Grahame's life in danger, the local authorities would have been equally unwilling or incompetent to deal with the situation.

With the Ala-ed-Dowleh in power there is at all events a temporary prospect of an improvement in the government of Fars. His Highness is, from an English point of view, somewhat harsh in his methods, but he keeps his province in order, and I have little doubt that the Bushire road, which has been infested by brigands for the last two years, will soon be comparatively safe, and that pillars by the road-side will make their appearance, warning men of the fate of the thieves who fall into the hands of the Governor-General.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 89.

*Consul Grahame to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

Sir,

[Undated.]

WITH reference to previous correspondence on the unrest still prevalent in Fars, and more particularly to my telegram No. 65 of to-day's date, I have the honour to inform you that on the 10th May, being at Bushire, I received from the Assistant Superintendent of Telegraphs at Shiraz a message to the effect that Shiraz Princes and merchants desired to take "bast" in the Consulate for some reason unknown to him.

In reply I telegraphed to him that I did not consider it desirable that the people should come to the Consulate in my absence, and requested him to advise them to this effect.

Almost immediately after my return here—viz., on the 4th June—I was warned from several quarters that the people of Shiraz entertained a project of coming here *en masse*. This warning having been repeated to me on the 7th instant by a reliable

person, I thought it right to mention in the course of interviews which I had on the following afternoon, both to his Excellency the Vazier-i-Makhsus and to the Karguzar, what I had heard.

His Excellency, who is perhaps not unconnected with this movement, remarked that he also had heard reports to the same effect, but did not know how far to credit them.

The Karguzar seemed somewhat perturbed, and said that such an incident would be prejudicial to his Excellency the Vazier-i-Makhsus.

I pointed out that I could not close my doors, nor refuse to forward Petitions to you to be dealt with as you might see fit.

I had so often received warnings of a similar nature resulting in nothing, and had so often troubled you with alarmist telegrams, that I did not on this occasion think it necessary to forewarn you.

Shortly before 10 o'clock this morning a crowd of between 300 and 400 people, composed of Princes, Notables, merchants, members of the crafts and guilds, &c., poured into the garden and marched right up to the broad verandah in front of the Residency-house, in which they settled themselves down.

After allowing them to cool their heads and heels for about twenty minutes, I went on to the verandah and with some difficulty, the press being very great, made my way to the central portion of it. Here I recognized many friends and acquaintances, among whom I may mention Prince Jemal-ad-Din, whose name is known to you from previous despatches of mine; Prince Muhammad Saleh Mirza, a near relative of his; Haji Izz-ul-Mulk (ex-Karguzar of Fars) and his brother, Haji Masoud-ul-Mulk; Mutamin-ul-Mulk, son of the old Sahib Diwan; Malik-ut-Tujjar (of Shiraz); Haji Abdul Rahman, head of the Fars Trading Company, and several other reputable merchants.

The crowd appeared to me to be fairly representative of the upper and middle classes tailing off with the masses. I noted an entire absence of the clerical element, also that Nasr-ad-Dowleh was not present.

After the usual compliments, addressing myself to the Malik-ut-Tujjar, I asked to be informed what motive had brought him and his friends to come here in such numbers. He replied that I must be fully aware of the grievances of the people of Fars which had now led them to seek refuge in this Consulate.

On my replying that I was only generally aware that such grievances were entertained by the Shirazis, and had no knowledge as to whether they were well-founded or not, the Malik-ut-Tujjar caused a Munshi to read out aloud a statement of grievances, containing ten separate counts, which statement I now inclose.

I would express my regret that, owing to the short hours at my disposal before post time, I am unable to send a translation.

I then addressed the Malik-ut-Tujjar, speaking as loud as possible, and said that the whole of the matters stated appeared to me to be of a purely internal nature, with the exception of an allusion to "rahdari." The levy of this tax, as they were aware, had been abolished by the instances of the British and Russian Legations. That, as regarded their grievances, I was prepared, if they wished it, to telegraph the gist of these to you to-day, and also to send their statement to you for such action as you might see fit. Possibly you might be willing to bring this to the notice of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or to some other quarter. I pointed out that their statement was unsealed, and requested that they would seal it and furnish me a copy in time for the post of to-day.

I then suggested that they would gain nothing by sitting in this garden, which was not large enough to contain them comfortably, and that they would be neglecting their own business. They replied that they had not closed their shops, but had left subordinates in charge, that they would not trouble me with their presence, but would set up tents in neighbouring gardens. They would, however, put up a couple of tents here for show, and would hold a "majlis" morning and evening.

I again pointed out that they had wasted some seven months of winter and had suffered much from the cold, and they would now be wasting their time and suffering from the heat. A wag in the crowd cried out: "Yes; we are going to have our 'kishlaq' and 'yilaq'" (winter quarters and summer quarters). Another man asked me if I would give a promise that their grievances would be righted in a given time. I replied that I absolutely refused to give any promise in a matter which in no way concerned me, and the remedy for which lay entirely with His Imperial Majesty the Shah. That I would no more give such a promise than I would promise a piece of the sun or moon to a child who cried for them.

[1066]



They must clearly understand that the Shah was master in such matters, and that no one could be permitted to say that the British Consul was substituting himself for His Imperial Majesty. I took this opportunity of informing them that His Majesty, according to a telegram received by me yesterday, was in health ("salamat"), having recovered from a recent indisposition.

I then retired from the verandah and wrote a short note to his Excellency the Vazier-i-Makhsus (a copy of which I sent to the Karguzar), referring to our interview of yesterday, and informing him of the visitors whom I had received.

While I was writing this a messenger came from his Excellency the Vazier-i-Makhsus to the agitators, bidding them come to him. This they refused to do, but agreed to send two of their number with the Consulate "ferrash" (bearer of my note).

I am now (4 p.m.) in receipt of his Excellency's reply, in which he says that he has not been able to understand from the spokesman sent the exact nature of the demands of the people, but is sending Prince Moiz-ud-Dowleh (one of his under-strappers) and the Karguzar to question the malcontents. His Excellency requests me to cause the people to return to their homes. I have referred his Excellency's letter to the principal Princes and merchants, and, as they obstinately refused to return to their homes, I pressed them at least to dismiss the major part of their following. This also they refused to do, alleging that it would then be reported in Tehran that there is only a handful of people here.

I am now informing his Excellency in the above sense in writing. Up till now (5 p.m.) neither the Prince nor the Karguzar have appeared on the scene. The wings of the stage are crowded with an increasing number of "supers." Some thirty of the protagonists are drinking tea and smoking "qaliyans" in the drawing-room.

Perhaps after a day or two I may be able to persuade some of the people to go home; at present they seem to be in a white heat, in which condition no arguments of mine strike home.

7 p.m.—The Karguzar and party have arrived. Everybody is talking at once in very loud tones. The garden is crowded and, as I am informed, the neighbouring avenues. The Delfidar estimates the number at nearly 1,000.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) GEORGE GRAHAMIE.

[26747]

No. 90.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 7.)*

(No. 187.)

Sir,

Gulahak, July 16, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez regarding the attitude of the Valiahd relative to the illness of His Majesty the Shah.

It is extremely difficult to obtain reliable information regarding the real state of His Majesty's health, the more so as Dr. Lindley has hitherto declined in any way to assist His Majesty's Legation. As far as I can gather the Shah's condition is about the same as when I last had the honour to report on the subject. His Majesty still walks with difficulty, is very weak, and has suffered at times from slight attacks of fever. The general impression at Court seems to be that His Majesty's life will not be greatly prolonged.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 90.

*Consul-General Wratislaw to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

Sir,

Tabreez, June 23, 1906.

WITH reference to previous correspondence on the subject of the Shah's health, I have the honour to report that, in spite of the fact that his Majesty is acknowledged to be recovering from the stroke of paralysis, the Valiahd is still sanguine that his

father's decease may be expected before long. He receives intelligence from the Shah's auderoon that His Majesty's general health is distinctly worse—in fact, that he is rapidly breaking up, the symptoms on which this diagnosis is based being, so far as I can gather, diarrhoea and fever at night.

I have had a conversation on this subject with Dr. Coppin, His Imperial Highness's French doctor, who assured me that these symptoms pointed to uræmia, and that he anticipated the monarch's speedy decease.

Neither Dr. Coppin nor his master, however, are likely to weigh impartially the chances of a consummation they so ardently desire.

About three weeks ago the Valiahd sent one of his Chamberlains, Itimad-el-Khalvat, to Tehran to gather news and report on the situation. This functionary has recently written to say that the Shah is very bad, but he complains that Dr. Lindley refuses to give him any information. The Valiahd is accordingly much incensed against the doctor.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

[26750]

No. 91.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 7.)*

(No. 190.)

Sir,

Gulahak, July 17, 1906.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 171 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to report that on the 13th June last Messrs. Ziegler's agent at Yezd, while passing through the bazaar, was jeered at by a Mussulman boy, whom he struck with his stick, inflicting a slight wound.

His Majesty's Vice-Consul at once saw the Governor, and arranged that the parents of the boy should receive compensation; and at first it seemed that the matter would be amicably settled. Subsequently some Mollahs and religious students created a disturbance, and on being informed of this by the Persian Foreign Office I saw Messrs. Ziegler's representative at Tehran and arranged with him that his Yezd agent should go for a few days to the neighbouring hills and should pay a reasonable pecuniary compensation to the father of the boy. I so informed His Majesty's Vice-Consul by telegram, and the Persian Foreign Office verbally.

On the 25th ultimo Mr. Baggaley telegraphed that the Governor of Yezd had been informed by the Grand Vizier that I had consented to Messrs. Ziegler's agent permanently leaving Yezd. It is hardly necessary to say that this is totally untrue; indeed, in my verbal communication to the Head of the British Section (Meftah-es-Saltaneh) I specially insisted that I could not tolerate Messrs. Ziegler's agent being expelled from the town for so trivial a reason. Messrs. Ziegler's Tehran agent was present at our interview, and the Meftah-es-Saltaneh frankly admits that I never consented to the Yezd agent permanently leaving that town, and that he gave my message correctly to the Grand Vizier. On the 30th ultimo Mr. Baggaley informed me that notices had been posted in the bazaar threatening the agent's life, and that the latter was leaving at once. Mr. Arter also showed me a message from the agent, who had been sent from Isfahan to take charge temporarily, stating that his life had also been threatened. I at once addressed an urgent note to the Grand Vizier requesting his Highness to send immediate orders to the Governor of Yezd to afford Messrs. Ziegler's agent the protection to which he was entitled, and stating that I held the Persian Government responsible for any damage to the lives and property of British subjects in Yezd.

I venture to think that this case shows that the Persian Government are powerless to maintain order in the provinces, and it can hardly be admitted that the trivial offence (if offence it can be called) of striking an impertinent boy is an adequate excuse for driving a European out of a Persian town, threatening his life, and disorganizing the business of a British protected firm. Although I have served many years in Persia I do not remember a similar case, and should Messrs. Ziegler prefer a claim for damages, I propose, with your sanction, to support it. The agent himself is a Mr. Würth, a Swiss, and he will no doubt appeal to the German Legation, if he has a personal grievance for the treatment which he has received.

In considering the case I venture to hope that it will be remembered that there are a considerable number of British missionaries at Yezd, and that in 1903 the populace of that town massacred about 200 Babis with impunity.

In your telegram No. 89 of the 2nd instant you instruct me that Consular Guards could not give efficient protection in the event of an anti-foreign outbreak, and that, if there is real danger of this occurring, British subjects at Yezd should remove to the coast.

I respectfully submit that Yezd is situated several weeks' journey from the sea, and that, if there were a Consular guard of, say, twenty-five men, the chances of an anti-foreign outbreak would be reduced to a minimum, Persian townsmen being usually cowards.

I have not yet received a full report on the case, but I have instructed Mr. Baggaley to furnish me with his own opinion and that of the missionaries as to the state of security at Yezd.

Perhaps the danger of anti-foreign agitation is not great; but it seems clear that the Persian Government are powerless to protect Europeans should such agitation take place, and I cannot help thinking that steps should be taken to afford protection to British subjects in distant and not easily accessible places in Persia.

I have the honour to inclose copies of correspondence with the Grand Vizier in regard to the incident.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure 1 in No. 91.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to the Grand Vizier.*

(Translation.)

June 30, 1906.

ACCORDING to a telegram received this morning from Yezd, it would appear that the Mollahs of that town are continuing their persecution of Messrs. Ziegler's agent, and have posted notices in the bazaar and other places threatening to kill him if he does not leave the place at once.

In these circumstances, I have the honour to request your Highness to send immediate orders to the Governor of Yezd to afford Messrs. Ziegler's agent the protection to which he is entitled. It is unnecessary to say that I shall hold the Persian Government responsible for any damage to the lives and property of British subjects in Yezd, and shall not fail to bring the case to the notice of His Majesty's Government as showing the growing insecurity in Persia.

Inclosure 2 in No. 91.

*Grand Vizier to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

Your Excellency and dear Friend,

17 Jemadi I, 1324 (July 10, 1906).

I HAVE received your note of the 30th June respecting the agent of Messrs. Ziegler.

Firstly, you must be aware that the Imperial Government do not manifest any reserve, in accordance with their sacred duty, in lavishly making the necessary exertions to prevent any kind of incident; and secondly, if in such circumstances you should see the possibility of injury to the property or persons of the subjects of your Government—seeing that you yourself are certain that the originating cause was the undesirable action of Ziegler's agent—the responsibility must be placed upon the originator; and it is clear that the carrying out of justice not having been relinquished, how is the Imperial Government to be held responsible for certain incidents which can occur in all parts of the world, notwithstanding appropriate steps (precautions)? Thirdly, as actually Ziegler's agent has left Yezd, these suppositions are for the present extraneous, and as I consider that your Excellency's conciliatory views are in agreement with my own, I have no doubt that you will consider desirable the changing of this agent of Ziegler's, whose wrong action and deed caused excitement to the people of Yezd, and trust that you will order that another agent be sent to Yezd, and the former agent entirely replaced, so that the cause of trouble should be entirely removed, and security protected; and the eventualities which you foresaw for your subjects, and the trouble which is imminent for the Government should not come about.

(Sealed) SULTAN ABDUL MAJID.

Inclosure 3 in No. 91.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to his Highness the Atabeg-Azam.*

July 11, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Highness' letter of the 10th instant, in which you inform me of the views of the Persian Government regarding the recent expulsion of Messrs. Ziegler's agent from Yezd by the Mollahs of that town.

Your Highness is pleased to state that the Persian Government, in accordance with their sacred duty, exert themselves to prevent such incidents in Persia. In view of the following incidents, all of which have occurred during the period in which your Highness has held the post of Grand Vizier, I regret to say that I am unable to share your Highness' views:—

1. The attack on Captain Gough, His Majesty's Consul at Kermanshah. No steps whatever were taken by your Highness to punish his assailants.

2. The attack on, and serious wounding of, Colonel Douglas and Captain Lorimer in Luristan. No adequate satisfaction has as yet been given for this offence.

3. The attack on His Majesty's Consulate in Seistan by a mob at Nusretabad on the 27th March last. Although the hospital of the Consulate was destroyed, and His Majesty's Consul stoned, no attempt has as yet been made by the Persian Government either to pay compensation, or even to punish the aggressors.

4. The recent outrage on an officer of the Indo-European Telegraph Department by Persian officials in the employ of the Deputy Governor of Kashan.

A portion of the compensation demanded in this case has been paid, and the Governor is stated to have been dismissed.

5. The recent attack on certain British Indian sowars proceeding from Bunder Abbas to Kerman on escort duty. Their assailants remain unpunished.

6. The attack near Dehbid on a sowar of the escort of His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz. A trifling compensation was paid in this case by the local authorities. The sowar was seriously wounded.

7. The recent attack by robbers near Shulgistan on Mr. Rice, of the Church Missionary Society. No compensation as yet paid.

8. Constant robberies of British-owned goods all over the south of Persia. In spite of continued pressure on the part of His Majesty's Legation, satisfaction is scarcely ever forthcoming, even in the most flagrant cases.

Your Highness states that I consider that the original cause of the disturbances at Yezd was the action of Messrs. Ziegler's agent. I have never denied that he struck the boy, but I at once telegraphed that he was to pay adequate compensation.

I also consented to his temporarily going, if necessary, to the hills near Yezd, should this step assist in calming the excitement of the people. But I entirely decline to admit that the fact that he struck a Mussulman child is an adequate reason justifying the local Mollahs in threatening his life and hunting him out of Yezd, thereby disorganizing Messrs. Ziegler's business.

I have the honour to inform your Highness in conclusion that I am laying the case before His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who will no doubt form his own opinion from this and numerous other cases, whether adequate security is or is not afforded to British subjects and British-protected persons in Persia; and whether Messrs. Ziegler have a just claim to compensation.

On receipt of Sir E. Grey's instructions I shall have the honour of addressing your Highness further on this subject.

[26751]

No. 92.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 7.)*

(No. 191.)

Sir,

Gulabek, July 18, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to report that the German Chargé d'Affaires, Baron von Richthofen, called on me recently and inquired whether it was the intention of any British Company to apply for a concession to work the main road between Isfahan and Bushire. He said that, in the interest of international commerce, it was desirable that a properly managed road should exist between the centre of Persia and the sea.

[1660]

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I replied that as far as I was aware no British Company held or as yet had applied for a concession for the road south of Isfahan.

Baron Richthofen somewhat vaguely suggested that, if no British Company were prepared to apply for a concession for this section of the road, he intended to lay the matter before his Government as a possible opening for German enterprise in Persia. I told Baron Richthofen that I would report our conversation to you.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[26753]

No. 93.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 7.)*

(No. 193.)

Sir,

Gulabek, July 19, 1906.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 185 of the 16th instant, and in continuation of my despatch No. 182 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to report that the principal Mujtehed of Tehran left on the 15th instant and passed the night at a mosque on the Kum road, not far from the town. They threaten, if the Shah does not fulfil his promise to introduce reforms and dismiss the present Grand Vizier, to proceed in a body to the holy places (Kerbela and Nejed) as a protest against the treatment which they have received and the slaughter of innocent persons during the riots.

I saw the Mushir-ed-Dowleh yesterday, and asked his Excellency what he thought would be the result of the withdrawal of the Mujtehed. At first his Excellency replied that the Grand Vizier had gained a great victory, but on my pressing him for his real opinion he replied that he thought the situation grave. He said that in spite of the precautions which the Government had taken to stop letters and telegrams, the news of the disturbances must sooner or later reach the provinces, when local disturbances would probably take place. He could, of course, not say how serious such disturbances might be, and this would greatly depend on the ability of the local Governors to calm the people. There was no doubt widespread dissatisfaction with the present state of things, and he could only hope that the reforms in the administration of justice, which would be introduced in about a month, would restore public confidence.

I may mention that yesterday morning two unknown persons came to Abbas Kuli Khan and said that some 500 merchants proposed to take "bast" under the British flag. I instructed Abbas Kuli Khan to reply that I trusted that they would not carry out their intention, as, in view of the recent riots, such action might cause the Persian Government to think that I was encouraging the agitators; if, however, the merchants came in a body to the Legation, I could not, in view of Persian custom, refuse them asylum. Fortunately nobody as yet appeared, and I yesterday confidentially informed the Mushir-ed-Dowleh of the message which I had received, and added that, in the event of persons taking "bast" under the British flag, I declined all responsibility. It struck me that his Excellency displayed considerable satisfaction at the prospect of His Majesty's Legation being filled with malecontents.

In view of the possibility of local disturbances, I thought it prudent to warn His Majesty's Consuls of the departure of the Mollahs from Tehran.

I understand that the Persian Government are secretly trying to induce the Mollahs to return, and that negotiations are in progress.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[26754]

No. 94.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 7.)*

(No. 194.)

Sir,

Gulabek, July 19, 1906.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 92 of the 11th instant, I have the honour to transmit a copy of the reply I returned to the Mujtehed Agha Seyyed Abdullah in answer to his application for assistance from His Majesty's Legation just before the recent troubles in Tehran.

The substance of the letter was, of course, preceded by elaborate compliments and inquiries after his health.

On leaving Tehran, Seyyed Abdullah addressed to me the letter, copy of which I have the honour to inclose.

You will see that he gives his version of his relations with the Persian Government and recent events, but he considerably underrates the number of persons killed, which was certainly over fourteen, and probably as much as twenty.

I have returned no reply to the Agha's communication, but it would appear to show that he is not highly offended, as I feared, at the refusal of the support he hoped to obtain from His Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure 1 in No. 94.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Agha Seyyed Abdullah.*

(Confidential.)

(After compliments.)

Gulabek, July 12, 1906.

I HAD the honour to receive your Highness' message of the 9th instant. In reply, I have the honour to inform you that it is quite impossible for His Majesty's Legation in any way to support a movement directed against the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Shah.

(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure 2 in No. 94.

*Agha Seyyed Abdullah Mujtehed to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(Translation.)

(After compliments.)

23 Jemadi-ul-Awwal, 1324 (July 16, 1906).

ON account of the discussions which, as your Excellency is aware, were in progress between me and the Atabeg-i-Azam with respect to the fulfilment of His Majesty's "destkhat" and the institution of a Court of Justice which had been given eight months ago, harsh action resulted to such an extent that streams of blood were dissipated and effused, until a few days ago, on Wednesday last (11th July), when one of the respected Seyyeds was unnecessarily killed, and we collected at the Masjid-i-Juma, which is one of the great and holy centres of Islam, for the purpose of conducting the funeral.

There was no disrespect shown by the people to the Government, and we did not expect any wrong, but only the fulfilment of the "destkhat" which had been previously issued. Such harsh measures were taken against us that it caused the whole of the people to rise. Again, on Friday, the 13th July, a number of people were beating their breasts and lamenting at the "Chaharson," when another respected Seyyed was shot at and killed by the soldiers of the Government, and four other persons wounded. We, fearing that more disturbances would take place and more people killed and blood spilt, have been forced to leave for the mausoleum of Abu Babovey, near Shahabdulazim, from whence we shall proceed to the Holy Thresholds. In view of the ancient friendship which has existed, and still exists, between me and the representatives of the British Legation, and especially with yourself, I write this letter to wish you good-bye, and I ask for especial care.

As this person (the Atabeg-i-Azam) seeks on all occasions to insult and to spill the blood of Moslems and to cause a revolt in the country—though God knows he is not able to check himself from ruining the State and people—should he continue this oppression, I request, in view of the friendship which exists between us, that you should on no account refrain from endeavouring to put an end to the oppression and transgression.

Although my hope is in the bounty of the Almighty, I have written this to place you in possession of the facts and to bid you farewell.

(Sealed) ABDULLAH-EL-HOOSSEVY.



[26755]

No. 95.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 7.)*

(No. 195. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Gulahak, July 19, 1906.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 34 of the 2nd February last, I have the honour to report that the Mushir-ed-Dowleh confidentially informed me that the Russian Minister was pressing the Persian Government very hard to give the Russian Government complete control of the Meshed-Seistan telegraph line. M. Hartwig argued that most of the principal telegraph lines in Persia were in British hands, and it was only fair that Russia should have her share.

I pointed out to his Excellency that Russia already controlled five telegraph lines in Khorassan, viz., Astrabad to Chikishlar, Astrabad to Gumbad Kaboos, Meshed to Askhabad, Meshed to Sarakhs, and Meshed to Artek, and that His Majesty's Government claimed the right to post signallers on the Meshed-Seistan line identical in number with those employed by Russia.

His Excellency replied that he was quite aware that what I said was correct, but the Persian Government were in a very difficult position. They were still, however, resisting the Russian demands to the best of their ability.

As I have already had the honour to report, it appears certain that the Russian Government has for some time practically controlled the Meshed-Seistan line, and the efforts of the Persian Government to oust the Russian signallers will probably fail.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[26757]

No. 96.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 7.)*

(No. 197.)

Sir,

*Gulahak, July 19, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit for your information a copy of a despatch addressed by His Majesty's Acting Consul at Seistan to the Government of India, showing the position of the quarantine posts in that province. I have reported in a Commercial despatch the present state of the plague epidemic, which would appear to have steadily declined since the hot weather set in.

You will have seen from my telegram No. 181 of the 12th instant that the Russian Minister states that the Russian Government has not placed quarantine posts at any place on the Afghan frontier, and that the reports to that effect are totally devoid of foundation.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 96.

*Consul Dankes to Government of India.*

(No. 317 c. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Seistan, June 16, 1906.*

WITH reference to your telegram dated 1st June, 1906, I have the honour to report as follows:—

1. *General Remarks.*—Quarantine posts have been established to the north, south, and south-west of Seistan, the object being to confine the epidemic to that region and prevent it from spreading to other populated tracts.

The physical features of the country are extremely favourable to this line of action, as Seistan is practically surrounded by deserts, and, owing to the scarcity of

water, travellers to or from the country are practically bound down to certain well-defined tracts. It may therefore be safely affirmed that the quarantine system was here inaugurated under more favourable circumstances than is the case elsewhere. Unfortunately, however, these advantages have to a great extent been counteracted by the apathy displayed by the Persian Government, and the total absence of anything resembling systematic control of the arrangements.

2. *Bandan Post.*—To the north a quarantine post was established at Bandan under the direction of one of our hospital assistants. About twenty-five sarbazes and sowars were provided by the Shaukat-ul-Mulk to assist the hospital assistant in quarantine operations, enforce quarantine, and watch the roads. The object of this post was to guard the roads leading to the north, to Birjand, Turbat-i-Haidari, and Meshed. The sarbazes were distributed between the villages of (i) Neh, (ii) Aliabad, (iii) Bandan, and (iv) Duroh. Of these four posts the first three were necessary in order to close the tracks leading from Seistan to the north through these villages; the fourth post, which seems to have been established independently by the Shaukat-ul-Mulk, was ostensibly intended to insure the detention of any persons who might evade the Bandan-Neh line and attempt to travel to the north by the Duroh-Awaz road. It appears, however, that the Shaukat-ul-Mulk instructed the sarbazes comprising this post to turn back any persons who might enter Persian territory from the direction of Dash-Jowain or Chakansur.

This seems to be an excess of precaution, since plague is not known to exist in Afghanistan at present, and it is most improbable that Seistanis would find it possible to leave Seistan by that route, more especially so since the Governor of Chakansur, Musa Khan by name, has established a line of posts along the Seistan-Afghan border with the object of turning back all persons entering Afghan territory from the direction of Seistan. Mr. Howson, the British Agent in Birjand, however, reports that few, if any, caravans have taken this route since the outbreak of plague in Seistan. A total of 1,618 persons have undergone quarantine at Bandan since the 26th January, when the post was first established.

3. *Birjand Post.*—To the north of Bandan a second quarantine post was established by Dr. Frank, the Russian doctor, towards the end of April last. The origin of this post is probably to be traced in the desire of the Russians to extend the Turbat-i-Haidari cordon further south towards Seistan, whereby, if unopposed, their influence in that district would become paramount. No other satisfactory *raison d'être* seems to exist. It is true a few persons evaded the Bandan cordon, but this was due to the lack of supplies and defective arrangements on the part of the Customs authorities. Were these remedied, all *bona fide* purposes of the Birjand quarantine would probably be served by the Bandan line. No details have, as yet, been received regarding the exact number of persons quarantined there.

The Resolutions passed by the Birjand Sanitary Council sufficiently indicate the ostensible object of the post, these are:—

(i.) That all arrivals from infected villages in Seistan, who have not passed through Bandan, be detained ten days at Birjand.

(ii.) All arrivals from non-infected villages in Seistan, who have not passed through Bandan, be detained five days.

(iii.) All arrivals from infected villages in Seistan, who have already been detained at Bandan, be detained three days at Birjand.

(This rule may be relaxed in favour of intelligent people.)

(iv.) All arrivals from the east and south of the Kainat from beyond a radius of 24 farsakhs be detained three days at Birjand.

(v.) All arrivals from Afghanistan be detained five days at Birjand.

In addition to these, Mr. Howson has since reported that Dr. Frank has expressed the intention, and has gone to Khusp to make arrangements therefore, to impose quarantine on all arrivals from Kerman, including such as come by the northern route via Rawar, Naiband, and Khusp. This last proposal seems quite unjustifiable (*vide* my telegram No. 315 c, dated the 15th June).

Captain Macpherson also objected to certain of the original Resolutions of the Sanitary Council (*vide* his No. 278 c, dated the 23rd May), but no decision seems to have been arrived at regarding these, though it appears from Mr. Grant Duff's telegram No. 89, dated the 11th June, that the Persian Government have sanctioned only five days' quarantine. It would appear advisable that all proposals for quarantine should be first submitted to the Sanitary Council at Tehran, or, at any rate, that that Council

should reserve to itself the power to sanction the imposition of quarantine on arrivals from non-infected areas. The present system, which gives full power into the hands of a local body swayed by different political views, is not likely to conduce to the extermination of the plague and tends to injure our interests.

4. *Nasretabad Ispi Post*.—On the west of Seistan a quarantine post has been established at Nasretabad Ispi, under the control of Dr. Clemenger, of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, whose services have been temporarily lent to the Foreign Department. The object of this post is to protect the Sarhad, Persian Baluchistan, and Kerman. Detention of all caravans and persons proceeding from Seistan has been ordered, and also disinfection of clothes, &c., by exposure to the sun. There has been very little traffic by this route.

5. *Koh-i-Malik Sikh Post*.—To the south a post has been established at Koh-i-Malik Sikh under a hospital assistant. The object of this post is to protect the Sarhad. Detention of five days and disinfection as at the other posts.

6. *Turbat-i-Haidari Cordon*.—In addition to the cordons mentioned above there is of course the Turbat-i-Haidari cordon under Captain Iyass. No posts, with the exception of an off-shoot of the Bandan quarantine at Duroh, have been established on the Afghan-Kain border, but, as mentioned above, Dr. Frank is apparently contemplating some such step.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) C. T. DAUKES, Lieutenant.

[26758]

No. 97.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.*—(Received August 7.)

(No. 198.)  
Sir,

Gulabek, July 19, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of the Monthly Summary of Events in Persia which have not been recorded in separate despatches.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) E. GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 97.

*Monthly Summary, July 18, 1906.*

*Tehran.*

M. DE STURLER, the newly-appointed Dutch Minister Resident has arrived. He replaces M. F. M. Knobel, transferred as Netherland Consul-General to Pretoria.

2. His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires hears from a secret source that a Russian Financial Agent will at an early date be appointed in place of M. Grube. He will be attached to the Russian Legation.

3. The Ejlal-ed-Dowleh, hero of an attack on the signaller of the Indo-European Telegraph Department at Borazjoon, an unfounded complaint against His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz, and numerous other rascalities, recently interfered with the Ejlal-ed-Dowleh's servants at Tehran. He was seized, dragged into the Jellal's house, and soundly beaten by Hormuz Mirza, the Jellal's brother, and others. He is stated to have been much hurt, but thoroughly deserved all he got. He is a Kajar Prince, and uncle of Shoa-es-Sultaneh, of Shiraz notoriety.

4. The Shah is at Saubkoranich, near the foot of the Elburz mountains. His Majesty's health is reported on separately.

During the recent riots great amusement was caused by the soldiers in the Sabze Haiden trying to insert their cartridges by the muzzle of their rifles instead of the breach. One, more intelligent than the others, at last got a cartridge into the breach, but dropped his rifle, which went off. His comrades fled in all directions.

6. Dr. Lindley is stated to have received 1,000*l.* from the Shah for his services during His Majesty's recent illness. Dr. Lindley is busy trying to oust Dr. Schneider, His Majesty's chief physician.

7. The Government have promulgated in the Official Gazette new general instructions for the Ministry of Justice, which are very long and exceedingly complicated. They include a general scheme of reform in judicial procedure in Tehran and the provinces.

*Meshed.*

1. A Russian named Roskin arrived in Meshed early in July with the object of opening a school for Persian boys for instruction in Russian and French. The school is to be nominally under a Turk named Haji Assadullah, who says he will feed all poor boys at his own expense daily.

2. The Belgian Director of Customs has been trying to get bricks for the new custom-house at half bazaar rates, as they are for Government account, and has, in consequence, experienced considerable difficulty with the brickmakers.

3. Major Kennion returned to Meshed on the 13th instant, and reports that the road from Meshed to the Russian frontier at Bajgiran compares unfavourably with either the Resht-Tehran or the Tehran-Meshed roads, and adds that it would be difficult to say anything more uncomplimentary about it. Road tolls are at present taken by the Reis-ut-Tujjar, the present lessee of the road, only on camels. He is said to be making arrangements to repair the road this year, after which tolls will be levied on all kinds of traffic.

4. The notorious Mujtehed Haji Mirza Mohammed Reza, of Kerman, was reported on the 14th instant to have arrived at Meshed after walking in bare-footed from Torok. He was given a great reception, and is said to have fainted from the pressure of the crowd.

5. Major Kennion remarks that it may be noted, in connection with our efforts to get a Robat-Seistan line made, that there are now five telegraph lines from Khorassan to or crossing the Russian frontier, viz.: Asterabad to Chikishlar; Asterabad to Gunbad Kaboos; Meshed to Ashkhabad; Meshed to Sarakhs; Meshed to Artek. There is a report that another line is to be made from Khaf to Pul-i-Khatun.

6. His Majesty's Acting Consul-General reports the steps taken by the Russians at Meshed to obtain a firmer hold over the Meshed-Seistan telegraph line, the end of which was actually taken into their office at Meshed. In reply to the protests of the Persian Government, the Russians say the line is as much under their control as the Tehran-Meshed line is under English control. After considerable trouble, however, the end of the Seistan line was removed again to the Persian office. The present Persian Telegraph Director at Meshed, Prince Jalil Mirza, appears to be amenable to the influence of His Majesty's Consul-General.

7. The arms in the Russian Consulate are reported to consist of the following:—

126 magazine rifles;  
14 double rifles;  
32 officer's rifles (various);

with the following ammunition:—

Small arms (7,000 rounds);  
5 boxes containing 24 bombs each;  
8 boxes of gunpowder.

*Turbat-i-Haidari.*

1. His Majesty's Consul reports on the 5th instant that 100 Cossacks of the Tehran Brigade, commanded by General Ali Agha Khan, arrived on plague duty. The Russians, who for over nine years had kept up a "sanitary cordon" when there was no plague, handed over the control of quarantine to the Persians when plague had appeared.

2. A report was received from Karez that the Russian doctor there detained caravans from the south for ten days, from Kandahar five days, and from Herat three days. Although he remains there for the present, he does not interfere with the quarantine arrangements in other places.



3. Captain Watson, I.M.S., was thanked by the Sadr-el-Olema on behalf of the people for his exertions at Jangal, and during the cholera epidemic. He reported on the 8th instant that plague no longer existed at Jangal, and that he was proceeding to Birjand.

#### *Seistan.*

1. The Russian Consul, M. Nekrassof, was reported on the 26th May to have made inquiries of the Deputy-Governor with respect to the boundaries between Seistan and Baluchistan and between Kerman and Nain.

2. Mr. Howson, the English telegraphist at Birjand, was instructed by His Majesty's Consul at Seistan to attend the Sanitary Councils until Captain Watson arrived.

3. A caravan with rifles passed through to Afghanistan on the 28th May, consisting of over 100 camels with 80 armed Afghans in charge. No attempt was made in Persia to interfere with it. His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires warned M. Naus weeks beforehand.

4. Baron Staudach, who is apparently in charge of the Customs at Birjand, is reported to have committed an act of gross injustice towards an Afghan trader, whom he is said to have unjustly accused of smuggling and to have hung up by his feet head downwards, and then flogged until he agreed to pay 250 tomans. Baron Staudach is further accused by Mr. Howson of levying fines in an arbitrary fashion, which probably are not entered in his accounts. This person was originally an Austrian subject, but his father and mother, his sisters and several brothers became converts to Islam many years ago at Tehran. The father is dead, the sons entered the Persian service, and the women have disappeared into the obscurity of Anderoon life.

5. Captain Macpherson, who was about to proceed on leave, handed over charge of His Majesty's Consulate to Lieutenant Danke on the 4th instant, and left the next day.

6. A sanitary council meeting was held at the Showket-ul-Mulk's house on the 1st instant. Dr. Frank, the Russian Medical Officer, was present, as well as Mr. Howson, the English telegraphist, who watched British interests. Dr. Frank, in reply to an inquiry by Mr. Howson, admitted that there was no plague in Afghanistan at the time, but said that quarantine had been established against all arrivals from Afghanistan, as it was impossible to say when the disease might break out there. Mr. Howson asked if Dr. Frank was in supreme charge of quarantine arrangements in Birjand, and received a reply in the affirmative. The outbreak of plague at Jangal was not mentioned, and Mr. Howson concluded that the Russians wished to keep the fact from the public. He did not allude to it either.

7. Baron Staudach was obliged to refund 40 tomans out of the 250 he forced the Afghan subject to pay (paragraph 4), and Mr. Grant Duff is addressing an official complaint to the Customs Department on the subject.

#### *Kerman.*

1. The Ferman Ferman, Governor-General, is reported to have heard with some disappointment of the choice of Ala-ed-Dowleh as Governor-General of Fars, as he himself desired the appointment.

2. Considerable suspicion attaches to the proceedings of Saad-ed-Dowleh, ex-Governor of Baluchistan, who is attending the Charbar meeting in connection with certain cases in which British subjects are concerned. He professes his inability to enforce the attendance of witnesses or to assert his authority generally, owing to his having been recently deprived of the Governorship of Persian Baluchistan.

#### *Yezd.*

It is reported that on the 20th instant fifteen camels and some merchandize were stolen by robbers near "Paraj," 15 miles east of Yezd.

A disease resembling typhus is prevalent at Sivand (between Isfahan and Shiraz). Owing to an epidemic of glanders at Morghab, Sivand, and the surrounding districts, the muleteers are moving to the hills.

#### *Shushter.*

Lieutenant Lorimer, His Majesty's Vice-Consul for Arabistan, arrived at Shushter on the 1st instant and made the acquaintance of Sirdar Mukarrem, the Governor-General. One of Mr. Lorimer's mules was robbed by some Bakhtiari but subsequently returned.

#### *Mohammerah.*

His Majesty's Consul reports that the Russian steamer agent at Bussorah is trying to arrange to land a large consignment of Batoum oil at Mohammerah, to be stored there in order to avoid the expense of storage at Bussorah, where there are special regulations in force regarding the storage of petroleum.

#### *Shiraz.*

1. His Majesty's Consul, who left Shiraz for Bushire on the 29th April, returned to Shiraz on the 2nd June by the Firoozabad route. The portion of Fars traversed on the return march afforded additional instances of the prevailing unrest in Fars.

2. M. André Miller, Russian Consul, and M. Boris Miller, Dragoman, arrived at Shiraz on the 16th instant from Bushire.

3. The agitation in Shiraz against the Shoa-es-Sultaneh, and the restoration of order by the Ala-ed-Dowleh forms the subject of a separate despatch No. 153 of the 15th instant.

#### *Isfahan.*

1. Mr. Barnham, His Majesty's Consul-General, arrived at Isfahan on the 9th instant.

2. The price of wheat and barley has been very high during the month, and bread has been scarce and very high in price. Many of the bakeries were closed, and considerable trouble was caused by the scarcity.

3. The Bakhtiari Khans have returned to their country from Tehran, where they spent several months trying to settle their affairs.

#### *Kermanshah.*

Captain Gough, His Majesty's Consul, travelled to Kazvin over the new Russian road via Hamadan, and did the journey from Hamadan to Kazvin in a carriage in three days. The total distance is about 31 farsakhs, or say 105 miles. There are eight rest houses, all except two being connected with each other, and with Hamadan and Kazvin by telephone. There are four three-arch bridges, well built of stone, and innumerable culverts. There are two caravanserais, an old one near Kazvin and a new one about 35 miles from Kazvin. There are also three toll bars, one at each end of the road and one in the middle. At present the road is not good for driving, as the metalling, which has been laid deep on two-thirds of the road, has not been crushed. There are several steam and horse rollers, but none of them were being used when Captain Gough passed over the road. Supplies are very difficult to get near the rest houses, as these are mostly located far from villages. There are quite nine or ten Russian officials distributed between Hamadan and Kezvin. Beyond one or two small parties of workmen, engaged in piling more loose metalling on the road, there was no evidence of any work being done, though much remains to be done before the road can be said to be fit for traffic.

2. With regard to a reported Persian Company to build a road from Hamadan via Kermanshah to the Turkish frontier at Khanikin, Captain Gough writes on the 18th instant that no work has as yet been commenced, though it is stated that a concession has been obtained and preparations are in hand.

3. The Governor of Kermanshah on hearing that the Turks had sent an irregular



force of Sowars amounting to about 500 men to watch the frontier near Mendali, ordered Daoud Khan, Chief of the Kallhor tribe, to proceed to Saumar with an equal force. Saumar is in the Kallhor tribal territory, on the Persian frontier opposite to Mendali.

4. Captain Gough has left Kermanshah on a visit to the Vali of Pusht-i-Kuk.

#### Hamadan.

There were bread riots in Hamadan in May last. The principal actors in the riots were Mahomedan women, one or two of whom were severely wounded in fights in the town. They mobbed the Governor's residence, and getting no satisfaction from him, or from any of the other officials, they took refuge in the churches in the Armenian quarter of the town, where they were fed and looked after by the Armenians. The Mujtehed tried to persuade them to come out, but the women refused to do so until the price of bread was reduced. The Governor in the meantime had sent his family out of town, and made arrangements to remove himself to a place of safety. As usual, the reason of the high prices was the holding up of grain by the rich people, who on this occasion, in consequence of orders from Tehran, had to sell their wheat to the bakers at a lower price, and quiet was at once restored.

#### Tabreez.

1. The malcontents at Shiraz who took sanctuary at His Majesty's Consulate are reported by Mr. Wratislaw to have telegraphed their grievances against Shoa-es-Sultaneh to the Valiahd, who passed on their complaints to the Grand Vizier for submission to the Shah.

2. As the result of a dispute concerning the supply of stone for the Russian road from Tabreez to Julfa, a number of Mussulman villagers proceeded towards the tent occupied by some Russian subjects who were engaged on the unfinished section of the road between Tabreez and Sofian. The attitude of the villagers appears to have been menacing, and two of the Russians in self-defence fired on them with revolvers, killing two and wounding two others, one of them dangerously. The Russians who fired were arrested and taken to the Valiahd's prison pending an inquiry. The incident caused no little excitement in Tabreez. The Russian subjects in question were Mussulmans, and the matter was settled by the payment of blood-money and the deportation from Persia of the offenders.

3. Mr. Wratislaw writes that from all accounts the Turks in Persian territory are behaving admirably, and even pay in golden liras for all they take.

4. With regard to the Soujboulak incident, the Turkish Consul-General, who was sent from Tabreez to investigate the matter, has now sent in his report to the Embassy at Tehran. It describes how the Persian artillery bombarded the house of some Turkish subjects and brutally killed a woman and a girl. The graphic descriptions of the Turkish Consul-General are said to have brought tears to the eyes of the Turkish Ambassador. The report was transmitted to the Sultan by telegraph, and the Turkish Ambassador expressed his view that it was useless to expect to obtain satisfaction by diplomatic representations, and that he awaited to hear what coercive measures would be taken by the Sultan's Government. The Ambassador apparently has lost patience with the Persian Government and their dilatory methods.

#### General Remarks.

During the month under review there have been troubles of a more or less serious nature in the following places:—

*Tehran*.—Clerical agitation and riots (No. 182, 15th July).

*Yezd*.—Trouble connected with Messrs. Ziegler's agent (No. 190, 17th July).

*Hamadan*.—Bread riots (p. 4 of Summary).

*Isfahan*.—Disturbances owing to high price of bread (p. 4 of Summary).

*Fars*.—Disturbances owing to maladministration and injustice of Shoa-es-Sultaneh (No. 183, 15th July).

*Seistan*.—Attack on British Consulate (No. 189, 17th July).

The following subjects have been dealt with in separate despatches:—

Plague in Seistan .. .. .	(Nos. 20 and 22, Commercial)	July 5, 9, 1906.
Extended privileges of Germans in connection with hospital .. .. .	(No. 180)	" 11, "
Tehran riots .. .. .	(No. 182)	" 15, "
Shiraz agitation .. .. .	(No. 183)	" 15, "
Arrival of new French Minister .. .. .	(No. 184)	" 16, "
Famine in Urmia .. .. .	(No. 185)	" 16, "
Attack on Mr. Gaine at Kashan .. .. .	(No. 186)	" 16, "
Shah's health .. .. .	(No. 187)	" 16, "
Bakhtiari road .. .. .	(No. 188)	" 17, "
Attack on Seistan Consulate .. .. .	(No. 189)	" 17, "
Ziegler's agent at Yezd .. .. .	(No. 190)	" 17, "
Isfahan-Bushire road .. .. .	(No. 191)	" 18, "
Russians in Transcaspi .. .. .	(No. 192)	" 19, "
Tehran riots—departure of Mujtehed .. .. .	(No. 193)	" 19, "
Communications exchanged with Chief Mujtehed of Tehran .. .. .	(No. 194)	" 19, "
Mashed-Seistan telegraph line .. .. .	(No. 195)	" 19, "
Agreement between Bakhtiari Khans and Oil Syndicate .. .. .	(No. 196)	" 19, "
Plague in Seistan .. .. .	(No. 197)	" 19, "

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL,  
Acting Oriental Secretary.

[26857]

No. 98.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.*—(Received August 7.)

(No. 495.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, August 1, 1906.*

I ASKED M. Isvolsky, at his reception this afternoon, whether he could give me any news from Tehran, and his Excellency replied that he was about to speak to me on the subject, as the reports which he had received pointed to an alarming condition of affairs. It appeared that some 10,000 or 12,000 persons had taken refuge in the British Legation, and he could not understand why they had been induced to go there. I told his Excellency that it was not an uncommon practice for individuals who find themselves in political or other troubles to seek sanctuary either in a mosque or a Legation, usually in the former; and that in my time at Tehran I had occasionally been compelled to receive such guests, though I had never known them to arrive in such crowds. The present time, however, seemed to be an exceptional one, and the circumstances to be unprecedented.

M. Isvolsky asked me whether His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires could have encouraged the refugees to have come to the Legation. I told his Excellency that this was manifestly impossible, and that I was sure that Mr. Grant Duff found the presence of the refugees to be most embarrassing, and indeed dangerous, and that no one would be better pleased than he to be quit of his unwelcome and uninvited guests. I said that my information from Tehran was more than a week old, and that Mr. Grant Duff had then mentioned that about 5,000 had taken sanctuary, and so far as I could recollect from his telegrams, he was in great perplexity as to how to deal with them. Were I in his place, I should be equally embarrassed, as it was impossible to turn them out of the Legation, and the massing of so many people in a confined space presented elements of great danger from several points of view. M. Isvolsky inquired who was supplying the refugees with food. To this I could give no reply, beyond stating that I presumed food was supplied to them either by their friends or by Mr. Grant Duff. It was clear they could not be allowed to starve. Observing that M. Isvolsky had some doubts in his mind, I asked him to tell me frankly what the Russian Minister had telegraphed on the subject. His Excellency said that M. Hartwig had telegraphed the fact of the presence of the refugees, and had added that the situation was serious.

I said that I believed that some of the higher religious functionaries had taken refuge in the Turkish Embassy, who had also been compelled to harbour them. I pointed out to M. Isvolsky that these matters were always most difficult to deal with. Once people had taken refuge in foreign Legations, it was impossible to drive them away, except in very exceptional circumstances, and when they arrived in such numbers as in the present instance it was physically impossible to expel them by force. I believed that the refugees had formulated among their demands that the Grand Vizier should be dismissed, and that the Mollahs should be allowed to return. The latter

were, I believed, at Kum in sanctuary, and the Grand Vizier, according to public journals, had resigned or been dismissed.

M. Isvolsky said that he telegraphed to Count Benckendorff to speak to you on the subject, as the matter was one in which he considered that we should act in common. I said that I was sure that we would co-operate with the Russian Government in measures which might lead to calming the situation, and I inquired if he had any suggestions to make to that end. His Excellency said that he had not, but perhaps the conversation which Count Benckendorff would hold in London might elucidate the question.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[26810]

No. 99.

*Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 7.)*

(No. 121.)

Sir,

*La Panna, August 2, 1906.*

I HAVE read Mr. Preece's letter of the 17th ultimo, to which my attention was called in the Confidential Print respecting certain oil concessions in Gikan and Mazenderan.

I have little doubt that the inquiries made of me by Mirza Hassan Khan were connected, at least primarily, with the transfer of these concessions to an Amsterdam firm by the Persian Minister at Brussels.

With reference to your despatch No. 105 of the 31st ultimo, I have no further news as to the Persian loan negotiations. They will doubtless be suspended for a time by the fall of the Ain-ed-Dowleh.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. H. HARDINGE.

[27206]

No. 100.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 9.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 8th instant, relative to the situation in Seistan.

*India Office, August 9, 1906.*

Enclosure in No. 100.

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*August 8, 1906.*

SEISTAN. Your telegram of the 25th ultimo.

We repeat, for your information, following telegram from Consul, Seistan, dated the 1st instant (addressed to Foreign Department, and repeated to Tehran and Meshed):—

"Following is position here:—

"The official specially deputed to inquire into disturbances has entered on investigation, and has fully discussed matter with me. He seems determined thoroughly to investigate matters, and appears to be an energetic, well-educated man, far superior to any of the officials here. I am disposed to believe that he is quite capable of keeping order, and really means to arrive at a settlement of the case; some slight delay, however, may be inevitable before he is able to grasp fully the position of affairs.

"The inhabitants of Husseinabad appear to stand in some awe of the new official, and are remaining quiet.

"The permanent garrison of Seistan consists of 400 men of the Kerai regiment. Up to the present it has been reinforced by 160 Kerai sarbazes and 70 sowars. The former are identical with the sarbazes of the permanent garrison, who are useless, but the latter seem to be a fairly good stamp of men.

"Rumour as to dispatch of guns, mentioned in my telegram of the 10th ultimo, is not confirmed, but more sarbazes are said to be on their way to Seistan."

[27347]

No. 101.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 10.)*

(No. 210.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 10, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances.

My telegram No. 207 of the 4th August.

The people considered the wording of the first Rescript concerning a consultative Assembly ambiguous, and refused to accept it.

At the request of the Grand Vizier, I, on Wednesday last, introduced the leaders of the refugees to his Highness. The leaders, after four hours' discussion, accepted an amended Rescript, which was signed yesterday by the Shah, taken down to the Legation, and read out to the refugees.

This amended Rescript orders—

1. The formation of a National Assembly, to be composed of princes, nobles, clergy, merchants, trade-guilds, and landed proprietors. Each class to elect representatives.

2. The Shah's Ministers will be assisted by this Assembly, in the work of reform, and the proposals of the Assembly will be submitted by the Grand Vizier for the Shah's signature, and will then be put in force.

3. Steps will at once be taken for drawing up Regulations for the Assembly.

4. Mahomedan law is to be enforced by the Assembly.

5. The Shah's Rescript is to be published.

The Rescript granting amnesty, &c., of which the substance was given in my telegram No. 207, remains unaltered.

About 200 of the refugees, who have separate grievances, remain in the Legation, but the remainder leave the Legation to-day.

Both the Grand Vizier and the refugees have warmly thanked me. There are great rejoicings.

[27441]

No. 102.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 11.)*

(No. 211.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 11, 1906.*

FOLLOWING sent to Government of India:—

"Telegram of the 8th August from His Majesty's Consul in Seistan.

"I concur generally with the views expressed by His Majesty's Consul as to the satisfaction to be exacted for the attacks on the Consulate."

[27540]

No. 103.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 13.)*

(No. 504.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, August 4, 1906.*

ON the receipt of your despatch No. 352 of the 31st ultimo, relative to the report that some steps were being taken to obtain a loan to the Persian Government through the intermediary of a Belgian capitalist, and with the authorization of the Russian Government, I wrote a private note to M. Isvolsky, saying that a rumour had reached me to the above effect, and that, although I considered it to be an improbable story, I should be glad if he would tell me if he had received any information on the subject.

[1660]

Y



I have the honour to transmit copy of the reply which M. Isvolsky was good enough to send me, in which he states that he has no information as to such a project, and that the Russian Government are taking no part in such a scheme.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 103.

*M. Isvolsky to Sir A. Nicolson.*

Mon cher Ambassadeur, *Le 21 Juillet (3 Août), 1906.*  
EN réponse à votre billet, je m'empresse de vous dire, de la manière la plus catégorique, que nous n'avons aucune connaissance d'un projet d'emprunt Persan que M. Naus aurait proposé à un capitaliste et que nous n'avons été dans le cas de donner aucun consentement du genre mentionné.

Je serai enchanté de vous voir demain, Samedi, chez moi à 5 heures.

Votre, &c.  
(Signé) ISVOLSKY.

[27541] No. 104.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 13.)*

(No. 505.)  
Sir,

*St. Petersburg, August 4, 1906.*

I TOLD M. Isvolsky this afternoon that, from information which had reached me, it would appear that there were about 14,000 refugees in the British Legation at Tehran, and that there did not seem to be any immediate prospect of their vacating the premises. It was clear that my Government could not intervene in the internal affairs of Persia or guarantee in any way the acceptance of the demands of the refugees; and as the right of asylum could not be ignored, the question had become an exceedingly embarrassing one.

M. Isvolsky again asked if any encouragement had been given in the first instance to the refugees to enter the Legation. I told him very positively that I was quite certain that such could not have been the case, and I could not conceive that any one should desire that a crowd of malcontents should invade and establish themselves in the grounds of the Legation. The great inconvenience, and, indeed, risk incurred by the presence of so many people in a confined space were too evident to induce any one to invite them within the gates.

M. Isvolsky said that he had received a telegram from Count Benckendorff which reported the views of my Government very much in the same sense as I had spoken. He had telegraphed to the Russian Minister at Tehran to concert with the British Chargé d'Affaires as to the adoption of any steps which might assist towards calming the situation. He asked how it was intended to deal with the refugees. I said that the British Chargé d'Affaires would doubtless do what was possible to persuade the refugees to depart, and perhaps the Persian authorities would see the necessity of making such concessions as would facilitate this procedure.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[27676] No. 105.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 219.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, August 13, 1906.*

IN view of the internal troubles in Persia, I have been informed by Count Benckendorff that M. Isvolsky desires to come to some sort of *modus vivendi* with His Majesty's Government.

Sir C. Spring-Rice starts for Tehran early in September, and you might tell M. Isvolsky that he will be instructed to keep in touch with his Russian colleague, and that His Majesty's Government propose, as far as possible, to adhere to a policy of non-interference. His Majesty's Government are ready to agree with the Russians that the Valiahd should be favourably regarded as the successor to the Shah if the latter dies. Sir C. Spring-Rice will probably ask his colleagues to agree to some limitation to the custom of taking "bast," and British subjects inland will be told in case of danger to them they should proceed to the ports. We propose, however, subject to these precautions, to let the crisis in Persia take its course.

If M. Isvolsky raises the question of a general agreement about Persia you should receive his views and say that they will be considered by His Majesty's Government, but the proposals for a *modus vivendi* should not be allowed to forestall or complicate the subsequent negotiations.

[27862] No. 106.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 220.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, August 13, 1906.*

ACCORDING to information which has reached the Russian Ambassador, the Persian Government are hesitating about sending a Commissioner to the Turco-Persian frontier to take part in the negotiations before the territory in dispute has been evacuated by the Turkish troops.

We concur in the view of the Russian Government that the Persian Government should send a Commissioner without making conditions.

[27347] No. 107.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 111.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, August 13, 1906.*

SITUATION in Tehran.

Your telegram No. 210.

The 200 refugees remaining should also leave, and, as more than sufficient use has already been made of His Majesty's Legation, you should urge them to go.

I am relieved to hear you have induced most of the refugees to disperse.

[27807] No. 108.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 14.)*

(No. 212.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 14, 1906.*

RESERVE arms for Seistan and Meshed.

I have received a telegram from His Majesty's Consul in Seistan stating that the Director of Customs there has inquired by what authority an armed Indian escort has entered Persia, and what is the nature of the goods which they have brought with them.

I have instructed the Consul to refer the Director of Customs to his Government.

If the Persian Government raise the question, I propose to reply that His Majesty's Consulate in Seistan has been twice attacked, and that the goods are arms which are required for its defence.

It will be within your recollection that after the Meshed riots last year arms were imported by the Russians.



[27893]

No. 109.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 15.)*

(No. 185.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, August 15, 1906.*

I MADE a verbal communication to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the sense of your telegram No. 219 of the 13th instant, respecting the instructions which Sir Cecil Spring-Rice would take with him to Tehran, and I explained that, at the same time, they were not to be considered as prejudicing any negotiations which the two countries might subsequently undertake with respect to the subject of Persia in general.

M. Isvolsky said he felt sure of the cordial co-operation of the English and Russian Ministers at Tehran.

[28004]

No. 110.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 112.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, August 16, 1906.*

HIS Majesty's Government desire to avoid giving any ground to the Russian Government for an impression that recent events at Tehran have been encouraged as an opportunity for interference in Persian affairs or in order to exploit the situation at the expense of Russia.

Should any necessity arise, you should endeavour, therefore, to co-operate with your Russian colleague, who has received instructions to concert with you as to the adoption of any steps which may assist towards calming the situation in Persia.

[28098]

No. 111.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 17.)*

WITH reference to Mr. Grant Duff's telegram No. 211 of the 11th August, the Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 16th instant, relative to the position in Seistan and the proposals as to reparation for attacks on the Seistan Consulate.

*India Office, August 17, 1906.*

Inclosure in No. 111.

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*August 16, 1906.*

SEISTAN. Following is telegram from Lieutenant Daukes, to which Grant Duff refers in his telegram of the 11th instant:—

"Following are the steps to be taken against rioters, which the Persian official deputed to inquire into disturbances has verbally agreed to recommend to his Government:—

"(a.) Apology to be offered by the Deputy Governor, Mustaufi, and, with the exception of Mujtahid Sheikh of Raza, by all the ringleaders whose names were reported in letter from this Consulate of the 31st March and telegram of the 25th April last.

"(b.) Mullah Mahomad Hussein Haji, Mullah Mahomad Taki, Saiyad Hussein (Banjari), and Khorashadi, four of the principal ringleaders, to be deported from Seistan (see my letter and inclosures of the 28th May).

[27881]

No. 109 A.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 15.)*

(No. 213.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 15, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances. Your telegram No. 111.

I hope before the end of the week to get rid of the remaining refugees, but it is a matter which will require careful handling, and may be difficult.

The members of the Persian Foreign Office, including the head of the British Department, have meanwhile gone on strike.

[28005]

No. 109 B.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 16.)*

(No. 214.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 16, 1906.*

TEHRAN disturbances.

Last night the town was illuminated for the return of the Mollahs from Kum. The Shah's brother went out to meet them.

"(c.) Damage done to the dispensary to be compensated by payment of 100*l*.

"(d.) Free grant of land to the extent of 10,000 zars to be made for extension of hospital (see proposals contained in Consulate letter of the 8th May, 1905).

"I would recommend the acceptance of these proposals, although they are much more lenient than those set forth in the telegram from this Office, dated the 4th April last.

"It is obviously impossible to say with any certainty whether the official deputed by the Persian Government is, or is not, acting in good faith; be this as it may, I venture to think that without loss of prestige we could not agree to less, while it might be impolitic, having regard to existing local circumstances, to press for more. The Russians here have assumed attitude such that those of the rioters who can claim their protection feel reassured of assistance, while those who have no such claim can count upon their sympathy. Our clemency and our power to inflict punishment, if we wished to do so, would at once be emphasized by securing the deportation of the four ringleaders named above, all of whom are well known as Russian Agents, and by accepting the apology of the greater number of the rioters. As regards Mujtahid Sheikh of Raza, he is a most influential Mujtahid; the evidence against him is weak, and, unless we are convinced of his complicity, it would appear inadvisable to act against him. The flogging of rioters, and imposition of fines, if carried out, would be taken advantage of by the Russians to make us unpopular, and would, besides, probably have an unfortunate effect in the future. Many rioters have, moreover, died from plague, and since leniency runs no risk of being mistaken for weakness, if we secure the deportation of four principal ringleaders, it is possible that a reaction may take place in our favour.

"I request that I may be informed whether these proposals are approved, in order that I may be in a position to treat with the official deputed by the Persian Government."

We regard the above proposals of Daukes as generally suitable for reparation for attacks on Seistan Consulate. We still think that first step towards security of Consulate should be the establishment of telegraphic communication with Nasratabad. Want of such direct line of telegraph accounts for delay in receipt of telegram from Lieutenant Daukes. Please see my telegram of the 16th April last.

[28191]

No. 112.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 18.)*

(No. 216.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 18, 1906.*

PERSO-TURKISH frontier dispute.

I am informed by the Persian Government that the Turks are collecting taxes in Merzawer, and that the Turkish Commissioner has returned to Suleimanieh.

This information has also been communicated to St. Petersburg by the Russian Minister.

[28268]

No. 113.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 20.)*

(No. 529.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, August 15, 1906.*

I MENTIONED to M. Isvolsky to-day that I had been informed that the Russian Ambassador in London had spoken in regard to the condition of affairs in Persia, and that I was authorized to tell him that Sir Cecil Spring-Rice would be leaving for Teheran in the early days of September, and would have for instructions to keep in touch with his Russian colleague. I added that it was the desire of my Government to abstain, as far as possible, from all interference in the internal affairs of Persia, and that in case of danger British subjects in the interior would be advised to proceed to ports on the coast. Sir Cecil Spring-Rice would probably consult with his colleagues as to some agreement being arrived at for limiting the custom of asylum being sought in Legations by Persian subjects. My Government were further ready to agree with the Russian Government to view favourably the succession of the Valiahd to the throne in the event of the demise of the Shâh.

[1660]

Z



M. Isvolsky said that he was glad to hear that Sir C. Spring-Rice would arrive shortly in Persia, and he was sure that he and the Russian Minister would co-operate cordially together.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[28191]

No. 114.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Connor.*

(No. 135.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

You should concert with your Russian colleague with a view to making representations to the Porte, if the facts are as stated in Mr. Grant Duff's telegram No. 126 of the 18th instant.

*Foreign Office, August 20, 1906.*

[28608]

No. 115.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 21.)*

(No. 219.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 21, 1906.*

ACCORDING to a telegram from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire, agitation against the Belgian Customs has broken out there, and is supported by the principal Mollahs.

The people have closed the bazaars, and, owing to the attitude of the people, the Director of Customs has been asked to close the custom-house.

[28682]

No. 116.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 22.)*

(No. 220.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 22, 1906.*

THE Shoa-es-Sultaneh is still intriguing to be reinstated in the Governor-Generalship of Fars, and the people of Shiraz, fearing that he will succeed, recently threatened to take refuge again in His Majesty's Consulate. I sent instructions to His Majesty's Consul to do all in his power to prevent this, and in private I strongly urged the Grand Vizier to send a message assuring the people of Shiraz that the Shoa-es-Sultaneh's return would not be permitted.

To-day His Majesty's Consul telegraphed that the Imperial Bank of Persia had been surrounded by a crowd, who threatened to wreck the building unless the doors were closed. A promise was given to the crowd by the Governor-General that the bank would be closed, and the local Manager telegraphed to Tehran asking what he should do. The latter has been instructed by the bank here to act in agreement with His Majesty's Consul, and do what he thinks best.

Subsequently the crowd threatened to attack the Persian section of the telegraph office, and attacks are said to be contemplated on the offices of European merchants and possibly on the British and Russian Consulates.

The movement may become serious, but it is not really anti-European, and is evidently intended to force the Persian Government to redress grievances.

This state of things at Shiraz can only be brought to a close by giving the people the desired assurances as to the Shoa-es-Sultaneh, and I am again strongly urging the Grand Vizier to take steps accordingly.

[28802]

No. 117.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 23.)*

(No. 221.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 23, 1906.*

SHIRAZ disturbances: My telegram No. 220.

I have received a telegram from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire, saying that, in view of the serious troubles reported at Shiraz, he is getting together a body of forty troops, and asks authority to dispatch them as soon as they are ready to start.

I have sent the following reply:—

"You should not send troops pending further instructions, but you may proceed with your preparations in view of the possibility of serious developments, though I do not anticipate such.

"The whole agitation is engineered, I believe, in order to extract from the Persian Government assurances that the Shoa-es-Sultaneh will not be allowed to return to Shiraz nor retain the properties he has plundered. The Palace clique, which supports the Shoa-es-Sultaneh, has the ear of the Shah, and great difficulty is experienced by the new Grand Vizier in opposing it. I believe, therefore, that the Grand Vizier welcomes this agitation in Shiraz, if he does not secretly encourage it, since it strengthens his hand. It is probable that the Governor-General of Fars himself is at the bottom of the whole agitation, and he is, I think, a strong enough man to keep the people in hand and prevent their taking extreme measures.

"In the event of the Shoa-es-Sultaneh persisting in his intrigues the demonstration may become dangerous, but it is not likely to become so otherwise.

"Yesterday I spoke very seriously to the Grand Vizier, and was told by his Highness that he had already been able to telegraph assurances to Shiraz as to the land in dispute between the Shoa-es-Sultaneh and the people. He had arranged a meeting with the Prince for to-day, and hoped that the whole question would be finally settled.

"I have addressed the Grand Vizier in a strong note, which may help him to convince the Shah that the situation is dangerous."

[28803]

No. 118.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 23.)*

(No. 222.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 23, 1906.*

AGITATION against Customs at Bushire: My telegram No. 219.

The Customs Administration have promised compliance with the demands of the people; the Custom-house has been reopened, and the town is assuming its normal condition.

[28845]

No. 119.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 24.)*

Sir,

*India Office, August 22, 1906.*

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to acknowledge Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 13th August, asking for his views on the suggestion made in the despatch of His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran of the 17th ultimo that, in view of the present situation in Yezd, a Consular guard of some twenty-five men should be stationed in that town.

The late disturbance in Yezd is said by Mr. Grant Duff to have risen from a trivial occurrence, in which Messrs. Ziegler's agent was to blame. Unless, therefore, there exists behind this cause a spirit of aggressive hostility to foreigners, it seems not unnatural to expect that the excitement due to the incident will die out now that Mr. Wüth has left the town. This view is confirmed by the fact that no telegram as to Yezd has been received from Mr. Grant Duff, so far as this Office has been informed, since that of the 7th July last.

I am, therefore, to say that Mr. Morley is not convinced by Mr. Grant Duff's despatch of the necessity of immediate action at Yezd. If, however, Sir E. Grey considers that the circumstances require the immediate dispatch of an escort, Mr. Morley would be ready to send the necessary instructions to the Government of India.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) HORACE WALPOLE.

[28907]

No. 120.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 24.)*

(No. 223.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 24, 1906.

SHIRAZ disturbances. My immediately preceding telegram.

His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz telegraphs as follows:—

"The bank is open, and there have been no further serious developments. Verbal assurances of the safety of Europeans were sent to me this morning by the Governor-General. In my opinion dispatch of reinforcements from Bushire would, in these circumstances, be premature."

Should Consul-General at Bushire be instructed to suspend his preparations to send an armed force?

[28907]

No. 121.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Grant Duff.*

(No. 118.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 24, 1906.

SITUATION at Shiraz.

If you consider it safe, you should send instructions to His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire as suggested in your telegram No. 223 of to-day.

[29032]

No. 122.

*Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 27.)*

(No. 578.)

Sir,

Therapia, August 21, 1906.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 135 of yesterday, I have the honour to report that I conferred with my Russian colleague this afternoon with a view to decide upon the representations to be made to the Porte respecting the reported departure of the Turkish Commissioner for Sulemanieh and the collection of taxes by Turkish officials in Mergawa.

I told him I had heard from the Persian Ambassador two days ago that the Persian Commissioner had been invited to meet the Turkish Commissioner at Mosul on the plea that the accommodation was better there and the facilities greater for sending the maps and plans connected with the frontier, and that Mirza Khan had protested against this proposal, and informed the Porte that the Commission must make their investigations upon the spot as had been agreed upon between the two Governments.

I said I had told Prince Mirza Khan that after I had seen the Russian Chargé Affaires I would support his representations at the Porte, and that if I were not able to do so myself the following day, owing to the many questions I had to treat, I would instruct my First Dragoman to make these representations in my name within a few days.

M. Svetchine said that he would also make similar representations, and that he would be able to do so on Thursday next, when he would see the Grand Vizier.

M. Svetchine was anxious to elicit from me an expression of opinion as to what we should do in case the Ottoman Government continued to pursue a policy of aggression. I said that I was not inclined to think the Sultan would favour a decidedly militant or forward policy, although I was sceptical as to the Ottoman troops evacuating Passova.

I had already warned the Porte that if they provoked a conflagration which extended into regions where our interests were predominant and very great we should

[28996]

No. 121<sup>9</sup>.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 26.)*

(No. 224.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 26, 1906.

SHIRAZ disturbances.

I have instructed His Majesty's Consul at Bushire to suspend his preparations, in accordance with your telegram No. 118 of the 24th instant.



be obliged seriously to consider the steps we should take, but that was rather averse I to direct menaces which we were unlikely to carry into execution so long as the policy of the Porte did not exceed certain limits. I said that under present circumstances I thought our best line of policy was to leave the Ottoman Government in doubt as to what we should do, while losing no opportunity of letting them see that we were following the question with great interest, and considered that our former intervention in the frontier delimitation imposed upon us both rights and obligations which we could not ignore if they pushed matters to extremes. I felt assured from information that had reached me that our representations and the interest we both showed in the question had acted as a restraint upon both the Porte and the Sultan, and I thought the best thing we could do was to continue in this line of policy.

M. Svetchine said he entirely agreed with me and would report to his Government in the same sense.

In connection with this question I may perhaps report that the Persian Ambassador told me on Sunday that his Government had telegraphed to him *en clair* instructing him to notify all the Persian Consuls in Turkey that His Majesty the Shah had granted a constitution to his people in compliance with their demands. He was further to inform the Consuls of the nature of these concessions which were similar to those reported by Mr. Grant Duff in his telegram No. 210 of the 10th instant.

His Highness added that this telegram had made a great impression upon the Sultan, who had immediately sent to the Embassy to know if it was true, and to express the hope that the Shah would carefully consider the consequences and not act with precipitancy in so grave a matter.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[28888]

No. 123.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 122.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 28, 1906.

SEISTAN. Introduction of arms and soldiers into the British Consulate.

See your telegram No. 212 of the 14th August.

Representations on this subject have been made by the Persian Minister here.

Is there any truth in his statement that soldiers threatened to fire on officials of the Customs, and that one of the latter was beaten?

[29404]

No. 124.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 29.)*

(No. 225.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 29, 1906.

MESHED-SEISTAN line. My despatch No. 195.

A warning has reached me to the effect that the Persian Government are about to make a formal concession of the control of the Meshed-Seistan line to the Russians, in whose hands the control practically lies already.

It is probable that matters have gone so far that further representations to the Persian Government would be useless.

[29512]

No. 125.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 30.)*

(No. 226. Secret.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 30, 1906.

MESHED-SEISTAN line. My immediately preceding telegram.

The Persian Foreign Office have instructed the Ministry of Telegraphs to hand over the control of the Meshed-Seistan line to the Russians, but the Minister of Telegraphs states that he does not wish to do this, and has sent a secret messenger to the Director of the Persian Section of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, saying

that he will suspend action on his orders for two days, and begging him to secure intervention by His Majesty's Government. The Minister says that his wish is to keep the control of the line in Persian hands, but that, failing this, he would rather see it in British than in Russian hands.

The Russians contend that they want the same control that we exercise on the Meshed-Tehran line, and probably no great harm would be done if their influence were confined to that, but they already claim that they must have the terminal posts in the Russian offices. On the Meshed-Tehran line we have not got the terminal posts in our own offices, and we have no employés in the intermediate stations, whereas on the Meshed-Seistan line there are already Russian signallers at many points. Our control on the Meshed-Tehran line consists, I understand, in sending orders through the Persian office to the Persian officials at intermediate stations, and, in the event of their not being carried out, complaining to the Persian Administration.

I shall do my best to secure postponement of the execution of the orders issued by the Persian Foreign Office, but I propose, failing this, to inform the Grand Vizier that we shall expect all privileges conceded to the Russians on the Meshed-Seistan line in excess of those conceded to us on the Meshed-Tehran line to be shared by us in equal measure.

[29591]

No. 126.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 31.)*

Sir,

*India Office, August 30, 1906.*

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to inclose, for Sir Edward Grey's information, a copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 22nd instant, indicating the probability of the Germans establishing a coaling station on the Island of Halul in the Persian Gulf, and suggesting that measures should be taken to prevent this step, either by means of a representation to the German Government or by instructing the Naval Commander-in-Chief to take measures to forestall it.

Halul is an uninhabited island situated in latitude 25° 40' north, and longitude 62° 25½' east, and is apparently not claimed by any of the Trucial Chiefs as his exclusive property, while it is outside the zone within which His Majesty's Government have accepted the fact of Turkish sovereignty.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) HORACE WALPOLE.

Inclosure in No. 126.

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*August 22, 1906.*

WE would invite reference to letter dated the 13th June last from Mr. Whitehead to Sir E. Grey, sent to us with letter dated the 6th ultimo from Political Secretary, India Office. Halul Island, near which there are intermittent petroleum springs in the sea, and which lies off the Pearl Bank, is an important position; and on seeing newspaper notice of rumoured German intention to secure coaling station there, we had directed Major Cox to inquire cautiously as to the status of the island.

Cox reports that, in spite of the absence of water, the place is not unsuitable for a coaling station, and that there is a better anchorage than entry in Persian Gulf pilot would indicate. Exclusive ownership does not appear to be claimed by any Sheikh, but boats from Abu Dhabi, Doha, and Bahrain occasionally use the place.

Though intention of acquiring island is disclaimed by German newspapers, yet, with a view to preventing awkward incidents, we venture to suggest that opportunity might be taken of informing Germany that this, as well as all other islands lying between Cape Musandim and north point of Katr, are regarded by us as outside the dominions of the Sultan of Turkey, and that, as the Pearl Banks are policed by us, no alteration in the *status quo* in respect of these islands, by which our local arrangements might be adversely affected, would meet with our approval. First Hamburg-American Line boat arrived to-day at Muscat, and German officer has been making inquiries as to ports and anchorages. Matter is, therefore, urgent.

We trust that suggested representation would suffice to obviate any necessity for direct local action, but if an attempt to occupy island should be made, perhaps instructions to take necessary measures to forestall it might be sent to Naval Commander-in-Chief.

(Repeated to Resident, Persian Gulf, and Naval Commander-in-Chief.)

[29609]

No. 127.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)*

(No. 202.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, August 31, 1906.*

PERSIAN loan.

M. Isvolsky called upon me to-day to inform me of an urgent request from the Persian Government for a loan of 10,000,000 tomans, and an immediate advance of 3,000,000 tomans, offering to concede in return any terms which may be required of them. M. Isvolsky stated that he wished loyally to bring the above to my notice, in accordance with the spirit of the arrangements made between Sir Cecil Spring-Rice and Count Lamsdorff; and to inquire what views His Majesty's Government held in regard to dealing with the apparently desperate financial difficulties of Persia. He added that Persian Government asserted that advances were being offered to them by Great Britain, and gave him to understand that they would turn to Germany or to us in the event of a refusal of their request.

I expressed my gratitude to his Excellency for this communication, and said that I could assure him that no offers were being made by His Majesty's Government, though I was unaware of the views held at present by my Government. I suggested that we might discuss the question of making an advance conjointly, after taking expert advice of what sum was really necessary. I added that this idea was my own, and that I was not aware what view you would take of it. M. Isvolsky cordially agreed with me that it was undesirable that Persia should apply to the German Government.

I would be glad to learn your views on the subject.

[29700]

No. 128.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 1.)*

(No. 227.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 1, 1906.*

MESHED-SEISTAN line. My telegram No. 226.

In an interview which I had yesterday with the Grand Vizier, his Highness admitted that he had given orders that the instruments at Meshed should be transferred from the Persian to the Russian office, but he denied that any further concessions would be made.

I pointed out to his Highness that the line ran right down to our Indian frontier, and that the fact that his first act as Grand Vizier had been to hand it over to Russian control would be viewed with surprise and regret by His Majesty's Government. A *quid pro quo* would be most certainly demanded, and, in my opinion, it was not likely to be a small one.

This view of the matter evidently disturbed his Highness considerably, and he protested that the date on which the Shah had given his signature was long anterior to that on which he had become Grand Vizier. He sent his son to me afterwards to show me the Shah's Minute on the original Russian note, in order to prove that he had not yet come to power when the matter was arranged. I pointed out that this made no difference to the actual facts of the case, but promised to inform you of it.

With the aid of a map I explained to the Grand Vizier's son that, thanks to their control of this line, the Russians would be able to place a whole chain of Agents right down to our Indian frontier along the Afghan border. I showed further that, if trouble broke out between Afghanistan and Persia, the Persians by their own act had enabled the Russians, should they wish to do so, to cut off the whole eastern frontier of Persia from telegraphic communication with Tehran. This line was the one of all others that ought never to have been allowed to pass out of Persian hands. The only remedy that I could suggest was that the Central Persian system should be linked up with Siestan,



or, in other words, that the Kuh-i-Malik Siah extension should be conceded. This argument seemed to impress him.

I urged finally that no further concessions on the line should be made to the Russians, and that, above all, the Seistan end of the line should not be allowed to pass into Russian hands.

I think I have thoroughly alarmed the Grand Vizier, and, if His Majesty's Government will impress on the Persian Legation in London that they take a very serious view of the matter, I believe that we would now have a fair hope of success if we pressed for the Kuh-i-Malik Siah extension.

I did not, of course, give any ground for supposing that His Majesty's Government would consider themselves adequately compensated by the grant of the extension concession alone.

[29687]

No. 129.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 1.)*

(No. 228.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 1, 1906.

ARMS for Seistan and Meshed. Your telegram No. 122.

In reply to my inquiries, His Majesty's Consul in Seistan telegraphs an unqualified denial of the truth of the accusations brought by the Persians.

[29702]

No. 130.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 201.)

Sir,

Gulakeh, August 13, 1906.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 190 of the 17th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith a copy of the Report from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Yezd, regarding the recent expulsion of Messrs. Ziegler's agent.

I venture to draw your attention to the letter addressed to Mr. Baggaley by the principal British missionaries at Yezd, regarding the state of security in that town. There would appear to be no general deep-seated animosity on the part of the people towards Europeans; but Messrs. Stileman and White are of opinion that, should the recent incident be permitted to pass unnoticed, there will be little or no security in the future for Europeans resident in Yezd. I would mention here that both the missionaries mentioned know Persia well, and are sensible and trustworthy persons.

I also inclose translation of the reply sent by the Atabeg-i-Azam to my note of the 11th ultimo, copy of which is already before you. I returned no answer to His Highness' communication, as I gathered from various sources that his term of office was nearing its end; but the cases to which he refers are well known to you, and you will be able to judge of the accuracy of the statement that the "Persian Government has always done, and will always do, its best in supporting the cases of British subjects."

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

P.S.—Messrs. Ziegler's agent, who is a Swiss, has preferred a personal claim for compensation against the Persian Government through the German Legation.

E. G. D.

Inclosure 1 in No. 130.

*Vice-Consul Baggaley to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 7.)

Sir,

Yezd, July 5, 1906.

WITH reference to the correspondence beginning with your telegram of twenty-four words dated the 14th ultimo, and ending with your telegram of fifty-eight words dated the 1st instant, regarding the affair of a boy having been struck by Mr. Würth, agent of Messrs. Ziegler and Co., I have the honour to report the following for your information:—

On the 13th ultimo, between 10 and 11 A.M., Mr. Würth came to the Vice-Consulate to inform me of what had occurred. He was closely followed by the Haji Khan, brother of the Governor's ferrash-bashi, who came on the same business, and just as the latter arrived I also received a note from the Governor reporting the matter. Copy of an extract from the Governor's note, and copy of an extract from my reply thereto herewith inclosed. The remainder of the Governor's note referred to the affair of the soldier-guard at this Vice-Consulate, copy of which I forwarded to your address under cover of my despatch dated the 23rd June, 1906.

On the morning of the 14th ultimo Mr. Würth and myself visited the Governor at his request, when he informed us that the matter was quite settled. After I had dispatched my telegram of 122 words, dated the 15th ultimo, I was informed that the Mullahs therein referred to, or, to be more correct, talabah (students), about seventy in number, were actually assembled at the house of one Mullah Hassan to protest against Mr. Würth's action, when we were with the Governor, and that they had been there since the previous night. If this be correct—and I have no reason to doubt it—the Governor would appear to have told us one thing and simultaneously reported to Tehran something quite the opposite. What could have been his object for this? I also stated in the same telegram that the Mullahs had prevented the boy's father from coming to the Vice-Consulate to take Mr. Würth's present. The before-mentioned Haji Khan was my informant for this. But the boy's father told me, when he eventually came to the Vice-Consulate to give a receipt for the present, that the Governor's ferrash-bashi had detained him at the Governor's residence for four days, and that all the time he was prepared to come and take the present, had he been permitted to do so.

I was quite surprised to receive your telegram of twenty-four words dated the 14th ultimo, as I had heard nothing further from the Governor on the subject. I did hear from other sources that when the talabah were assembled at Mullah Hassan's house the Naib-ul-Hukumeh gave Mullah Hassan something in writing to the effect that Mr. Würth should leave Yezd in five days, and that the time had, through the good offices of Nawab Agha Hassan, been extended to twenty days. Directly I received your telegram I forwarded a Persian translation of it to the Governor. You will notice that my forwarding note, copy of which I inclose herewith, is worded in such a way as to draw from the Governor an admission that the above-mentioned paper had been given; but, as you will observe from his reply, copy of which I inclose, he evades the point. You will notice too that the Governor, in his note, takes a most alarming view of the situation. There was no reason for this, as there was not then nor subsequently any likelihood of a riot. Had there been the slightest probability of a serious disturbance, I should have had Parsis coming to me to make inquiries as to what was being done, as they are always the first to scent danger; none came, however, and none troubled about the matter.

On the 16th ultimo the before-mentioned Haji Khan arranged with Mr. Würth that he would go to the office with him the following day (Sunday) to enable him to get certain books, also money from the safe, and I agreed to go with them; but when the time came to go Haji Khan sent to say that the Governor would not allow of it. As Mr. Würth urgently required the books, and wished to remove the money from the safe in order to deposit it in the bank, I went myself to Ziegler's office and did what was necessary. This action on my part would appear to have annoyed the Governor, and to have caused him to report the incident of the soldier-guard to the authorities in Tehran (*vide* your telegram of nineteen words dated the 18th ultimo).

On the 20th ultimo, Nawab Agha Hassan sent me a verbal message to say that he was endeavouring to come to a satisfactory understanding with Mullah Hassan and the talabah, and that there was a fair prospect of a settlement being arrived at if the Governor did not oppose him; hence my telegram of forty-five words of the same date. Again, on the 25th ultimo, he sent me another verbal message to say that everything had been arranged, as stated in my telegram of eighty words of the 25th ultimo, but that the Governor would not agree to the arrangement.

On the 27th ultimo, about noon, Haji Khan came to see me to ascertain for the Governor when Mr. Würth intended to leave Yezd, and stated that the twenty days' grace had expired. My patience having become somewhat exhausted, I answered him rather sharply, and told him to inform the Governor with my compliments that I knew nothing of the twenty days' grace, that my orders from Tehran were that Mr. Würth had to remain in Yezd, and that he would remain. Later in the day I received your telegram of forty-seven words of the same date, and at once informed the Governor of its contents, but he did not reply to my note, copy of which I inclose herewith.

Evidently the Governor was in a great hurry to clear Mr. Würth out of Yezd, as, supposing the time was to date from the day Mr. Würth struck the boy, the twenty days would not have expired until the 3rd instant.

On the 28th ultimo I was informed that Mullah Hassan and the talabah were again agitating for Mr. Würth to leave Yezd, and on the morning of the 30th ultimo I was informed of the notice posted in different parts of the town threatening to kill Mr. Würth if he did not quit Yezd, and I at once obtained an original copy, which I forward herewith with translation. I am told that Sheikh Mahomed Jaffer, Sabsewari, an enemy of Nawab Agha Hassan, had the notice posted, and that men of the Majd-ul-Ulema Ardekani removed the notice.

I consider the notice was sheer bluff, and nothing more. It was up for only a few hours on the 30th ultimo, having apparently been posted over night. Simultaneously with the posting of the notice Mullah Hassan disappeared from the town, and is reported to be with the Governor at a garden, Bagh-i-Nasari, about 8 miles from Yezd, but whether he is there as a guest or under detention I am unable to ascertain.

As I was unable to get the boy's father to come to the Vice-Consulate to receive the present, it was handed to Nawab Agha Hassan, who kindly promised to give it to the boy's father and obtain a receipt. However as Nawab Agha Hassan was not permitted to interfere in the case, he returned the money to Mr. Würth, and it was then given to the boy's father by Messrs. Ziegler and Co.'s broker in the presence of Seyyed Hiar (vide copy of receipt herewith inclosed). The receipt was brought to me on the 3rd instant by the boy's father.

There is a report that the Governor accuses Zein-ul-Abedin Khan, the Jellal-ed-Dowleh's agent, of having stirred up the talabah, and that the Governor's object in thus accusing Zein-ul-Abedin Khan is to bring him into discredit with the Central Government, and obtain his expulsion from Yezd. Just as I write this, news reaches me that he has already been taken prisoner, and is to be sent under escort to Tehran. Zein-ul-Abedin Khan was here to see to the revenues of Taft and other places in the Yezd district which are "toyool" (fief) of the Jellal-ed-Dowleh, and I am informed that the Governor is working to obtain control of these revenues.

I am convinced that the Governor could easily have settled this matter at any time, had he wished to do so; and if there had been no Governor here, both Seyyed Hari and Nawab Agha Hassan would have done so. Also that the Governor intended from the first that Mr. Würth should be driven from Yezd.

Nawab Agha Hassan does not wish his name to be mentioned to the Persian authorities in Tehran in connection with this case. This gentleman seems very favourably disposed towards Europeans, and always ready to render them assistance when necessary.

Mr. Würth left here for Isfahan on the 1st instant. He had been in Yezd for about five years, and was very popular both with the Persians and Europeans. This fact should, I think, be communicated to Messrs. Ziegler and Co., otherwise they might come to a wrong conclusion as to Mr. Würth's fitness to be their agent in Yezd. Mr. Würth explained to me that he had not, of course, any intention of striking the boy on the head, but that the boy in dodging put his head in the way.

With reference to the question contained in your telegram of fifty-eight words, dated the 1st instant, as to the state of security in Yezd, I have the honour to forward a note in original from the Rev. C. H. Stileman and Dr. White, in which they give their opinion. I quite indorse what they say, and feel that I can add little to it. I have heard that another Babi massacre is contemplated in which Europeans might be included, but I very much doubt the latter. Nevertheless, Europeans would feel more secure with a strong and reliable Governor, who should have the necessary troops at his command to maintain order. At the present time there are only about forty soldiers here, which, I believe is the full complement for Yezd.

A copy of this report and inclosures will, in due course, be forwarded to the Consul-General at Isfahan, together with copies of the telegrams which have passed.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) J. BAGGALEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 130.

Rev. C. H. Stileman and Dr. H. White to Vice-Consul Baggaley.

Dear Mr. Baggaley,

Yezd, July 2, 1906.

IN accordance with your request for an expression of our opinion as to the present state of Yezd, and the amount of security enjoyed by the European community here, we beg to make the following statement:—

In our opinion, there is no general deep-seated animosity on the part of the people towards Europeans. At the same time there is a rough and lawless element in the place which may at any time be easily roused by unscrupulous men; this cannot be ignored, and requires a really strong hand to keep it in check.

Now that by appealing to the passions of the people a successful effort has been made to turn Messrs. Ziegler and Co's agent out of the town, we feel that, if such an action as this be allowed to pass unnoticed, there will be little or no security in the future for Europeans resident in Yezd.

Believe, &c.  
(Signed) C. H. STILEMAN.  
HENRY WHITE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 130.

The Grand Vizier to Mr. E. Grant Duff.

(Translation.)

July 19, 1906.

I HAVE received your reply of the 11th instant respecting Messrs. Ziegler's agent at Yezd. In reply to the various cases mentioned in your note, I have the honour to make the following statements:—

1. The attack on Captain Gough: Careful inquiries have been made in this case, and it appears, from the report sent by that officer to the British Consul-General at Tabreez, that not only the Kurds did not attack him, but he, accompanied by his guards, galloped towards the Kurds and fired guns, and that when the Kurds ran away he pursued them, accompanied by his guards, and the Kurds fired a few shots in self-defence. The action of the Kurds in defending themselves in distress cannot therefore be interpreted as an attack on Captain Gough, because, if he had not galloped towards them, they, who had no ill-intention, would undoubtedly not have fired while they were escaping.

2. Attack on Colonel Douglas and Captain Lorimer by the Direkward Mirs in Laristan: As you have been repeatedly informed by the Persian Foreign Office, the local authorities informed the said officials when they were starting that the roads, by which they intended to travel, were unsafe and that the Lurs were in a state of unrest, and requested them to postpone their journey for a few days till order was restored: but the said English officials, having confidence in the friendliness of the Direkward Mirs, did not comply with this request and went on the journey.

After the incident the English officers in question gave a written statement to the Begler Begi, of Khoremabad, saying that the responsibility of the incident did not rest with the Persian Government, and that they travelled knowing the state of the country.

Although, under these circumstances, the Persian Government was not responsible for the incident, his Highness the Firman Firma, by the order of the Government, took an expedition against the culprits; and the Direkward Mirs, whose names were given, were arrested and their photographs sent to you.

3. The attack on the dispensary of the British Consulate by the inhabitants of Seistan: The reason of this attack was the measures taken against the religion. On account of the severity of the plague and the deplorable condition of the inhabitants, it was not advisable that any measure which might increase the public excitement, or might tend to disorganize the quarantine arrangements, and the consequent widespread of the epidemic, should be taken. Should the circumstances allow, no effort of course will be lost in this matter. The Momtazen-us-Sultaneh, who has gone to Seistan, has been instructed to make the necessary arrangements in this matter on his arrival in that place.

4. The outrage on one of the members of the Indo-European Telegraph Department by the employés of the Governor of Kashan: All the demands made and the



compensation asked for in this matter have been granted, and no other measures remain to be taken.

5. Robbery of three Indian sowars: As soon as this matter was brought to the notice of the Foreign Office, the necessary orders were issued, and the authorities in Fars and the Gulf ports, who are trying to arrest the robbers, will be again pressed. The settlement of this recent case has not been delayed sufficiently to require a reminder.

6. The attack on the Shiraz Consulate Guard at Dehband: As you have stated, compensation has been paid in this case.

7. Robbery of Mr. Rice, of the Church Missionary Society: As you have been informed by the Foreign Office, as soon as the robbery took place and it was brought to the notice of the Fars authorities, the robbers were arrested, and no doubt after the inquiry the stolen articles will be returned, or compensation will be paid.

8. The robbery in Southern Persia in general: Although the term is vague, I have to inform you that the Governor-General of Fars has been fully instructed in this matter, and a Special Commissioner has been sent to Southern Persia to settle the outstanding cases, and this will soon be done.

With regard to Messrs. Ziegler's agent: On the first day the Foreign Office informed you that immediate steps were necessary in this matter, and you had stated that telegraphic instructions had been sent for the payment of adequate compensation and for the agent's leaving the place; but for some time neither the compensation was paid to the guardians of the boy, nor did the agent leave the place. Of course, when no steps are taken in such matters it causes excitement among the people. I have no doubt that you agree with me that in cases, which may lead to trouble, the trouble should be avoided by at once giving satisfaction to the parties concerned.

I do not consider it superfluous to request you to be good enough to communicate to the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, when you communicate with His Majesty's Government on the above-mentioned cases, the steps taken by the Persian Government, or to send him a copy of this note. I have no doubt that his Excellency will be glad to hear of the measures taken by the Persian Government, and will agree that no effort has been lost in the cases in question, and will see that, in view of the sincere friendship existing between the two Governments, the Persian Government has always done, and will do, its best in supporting the cases of British subjects.

I avail, &c.

[29703]

No. 131.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 102.)

Sir,

*Gulahak, August 13, 1906.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 189 of the 17th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose the translation of a note from the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, stating that strict orders have been sent to the Montahen-es-Sultaneh to take measures regarding the two attacks on His Majesty's Consulate in Seistan.

From a telegram which I received recently from Mr. Daukes it would appear that the special official sent to investigate the causes of the disturbances of last March has verbally agreed to recommend to the Persian Government:—

1. That the Deputy Governor, the Mustanfi, and all the ringleaders except the Mujtahid, Sheikh Reza, shall offer an apology.

2. That four principal ringleaders, Mullah Mahomed Taki, Mullah Mahomed Hussein, Seyed Hussein Boujari, and Haji Khorashadi, shall be deported from Seistan.

3. That 100% compensation be paid by the Persian Government for the damage done by the rioters to the Consulate dispensary.

4. That the Persian Government shall grant free of charge 10,000 zars of land for the extension of the Consulate hospital.

Mr. Daukes is of opinion that, if the Montahen-es-Saltaneh is acting in good faith, the above punishment and compensation, although lenient, is sufficient to meet the case. He thinks that to insist on the flogging of the rioters or on the imposition of fines might have an unfortunate effect in the future, and would be taken advantage of by the Russians to make us unpopular in Seistan. He adds that many of the rioters have since died of plague.

I had the honour to express my general concurrence in Mr. Daukes' views in a telegram to the Government of India (see my telegram to you No. 211 of the 11th instant).

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure 1 in No. 131.

*Mushir-ed-Dowleh to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(Translation.)

*July 24, 1906.*

I HAVE received your note of the 13th instant informing me that, on the night of the 10th instant, a number of men apparently from Husseinabad had scaled up the walls of the British Consulate and then fled away. Telegraphic orders have been sent to the proper authorities on the subject. I do not consider it superfluous to point out that, as you have already stated, the men in question had climbed up the walls at night and then ran away. It appears that they did not intend to attack the Consulate, but that they wanted to steal, because, if they wanted to attack, they would not come at night and then run away. The delay in the measures was, however, on account of the pending arrival of the Montahen-es-Sultaneh, the officer in charge of the Seistan frontier. When I heard of his arrival there, I sent him strong telegrams to take measures in connection with the two cases and to telegraph the result, which I will not fail to communicate to you.

[29704]

No. 132.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 203.)

Sir,

*Gulahak, August 13, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez regarding the position of the Valiahd.

I have since heard from Mr. Wratislaw that the arms which the Heir-Apparent has purchased in Russia have reached their destination.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 132.

*Consul-General Wratislaw to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

Sir,

*Tabreez, July 14, 1906.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 61 of the 12th instant, reporting the departure of the Valiahd's "Russian Tutor" to Russia for the purpose of purchasing rifles for the Valiahd, I have the honour to add that it is understood that the Russian Government, through their Consul-General here, have consented to sell him a number of their earliest mark of magazine rifles, with ammunition, at a low price. This weapon, though obsolescent, is of a vastly superior type to anything in the hands of the Persian army, at least in this part of the country.

The unpopularity of the Valiahd, to which reference was made in the above telegram, is principally due to his participation, or supposed participation, in the ring to maintain the price of corn. The two persons most interested in the continuation of the present high prices are the Imam Jumaa and the Saad-ul-Mulk, the latter being now Beglerbeghi, of Tabreez. Both of them enjoy the favour of His Imperial Highness, and, but for his support, could not possibly act in the arbitrary way they do.

The upper classes, who have a wholesome awe of the Valiahd, are more reticent than their inferiors; but they do not like him, and are in constant fear lest the cupidity, which is His Imperial Highness' chief characteristic, should lead him to squeeze them. All have, too, become more or less imbued with the revolutionary ideas prevalent on the other side of the Russian frontier, which are spreading to Azerbaijan at a remarkable

rate, aided by the manifestoes printed by "Young Persians" residing in the Caucasus and scattered broadcast in the streets of Tabreez.

Further, the Valiahd's patronage of the Imaam Jumaa has necessarily rendered him objectionable to rival ecclesiastics, particularly to Haji Mirza Hassan Agha, who is really the head Mujtehed of Tabreez, though the Imaam Jumaa's greater wealth and push render him a formidable competitor for the position. Hassan Agha has declared himself in sympathy with the constitutional party at Tehran, and is said to advocate considerable restriction of the powers of the monarchy.

In this connection, I should mention that my Mirza has been sounded by Mirza Ahmet Agha, brother of Mirza Hassan Agha, and himself a prominent Mollah, respecting my willingness to receive in "bait" a number of ecclesiastics who wish to make a demonstration against the land-grabbing propensities and general arbitrariness of the Imaam Jumaa. Such a demonstration would, I am convinced, be intended and generally understood as directed as much against the Valiahd as the Imaam Jumaa, and I have instructed my Mirza to throw all possible cold water on the idea.

I am not aware that the Shoa-es-Sultaneh has, on his merits, any supporters in this district, but he might be used as a stick with which to beat the Valiahd.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

[29705] No. 133.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 204. Confidential.)  
Sir,

*Gulahak, August 13, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, on the subject of the attitude of His Imperial Highness the Valiahd and the Tabreez Mollahs in regard to the fall of the Grand Vizier and the reform movement in Tehran.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 133.

*Consul-General Wratislaw to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 41. Confidential.)  
Sir,

*Tabreez, August 2, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to report that no disturbances of any kind have occurred here in connection with the clerical agitation. The mosques were closed for a day, but reopened as soon as the news of the Grand Vizier's resignation arrived.

The Tabreez Mollahs are now waiting to take their cue from their Tehran colleagues at Kumm. It is understood that the latter intend to stand out for further concessions, and they will doubtless receive full support from Tabreez should they do so. The general public does not manifest much interest one way or the other.

The Valiahd is naturally delighted at the fall of his enemy the Atabeg, and is convinced that it has been brought about by His Majesty's Legation as a personal favour to himself. He has expressed his gratitude to Nizam-es-Sultaneh for having shown him that it was to his interest to cultivate more friendly relations with British Representatives before this crisis occurred.

I gather that His Imperial Highness is of opinion that sooner or later his presence will be required at Tehran, even before the decease of the Shah, regarding the state of whose health he continues to receive pessimistic reports.

I had occasion to pay him a formal visit yesterday, but as the Karguzar was present the conversation was confined to ordinary topics. His Imperial Highness was obviously in the highest spirits, and his manner to me was extremely friendly.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

[29706]

No. 134.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 205.)  
Sir,

*Gulahak, August 13, 1906.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 171 of the 21st June last, I have the honour to report that I have succeeded in obtaining from Mushir-ed-Dowleh a written promise that Saad-ed-Dowleh, late Minister of Commerce, will be permitted to live anywhere in the Shah's dominions except Tehran, and that his life and property will be secure.

His Excellency has now left His Majesty's Vice-Consulate at Yezd, and has expressed his deep gratitude for such unofficial steps as I have been able to take in his favour.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[29707]

No. 135.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 206. Confidential.)  
Sir,

*Gulahak, August 13, 1906.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 193 of the 19th ultimo, I have the honour to report that on the evening of that day about fifty Mollahs and merchants took refuge in His Majesty's Legation at Tehran.

As I had the honour to state in my above despatch, I duly warned the Mushir-ed-Dowleh of what would probably happen, and about a fortnight previously I had also told his Excellency that I knew that trouble was brewing, and that it was not unlikely that a large number of the Shah's subjects would resort to His Majesty's Legation. I requested his Excellency to tell the Grand Vizier, who would no doubt take such measures as he thought desirable. Apparently nothing was done to prevent the people from carrying out their intention.

From the 21st July to the 29th July the refugees increased from 700 to 12,000, and on the night of the 2nd instant I was informed by the heads of the guilds that there were about 14,000 persons in the Legation. These numbers are of course approximate. On learning of the arrival of the refugees in the Legation I at once sent one of my staff to ask what they wanted. They replied briefly as follows:—

1. Their lives and properties were no longer secure.
2. In the absence of the principal Ulama they were unable to get contracts sealed, and generally to obtain such services as would in Europe be performed by solicitors and priests.
3. They demanded the establishment of Law Courts, the administration of which should not be wholly in the hands of venal officials.
4. They entirely declined to deal directly with the Persian Government or to leave the protection of the British flag until their grievances were redressed.

In my note of the 20th ultimo I informed the Mushir-ed-Dowleh of the statements of the refugees, at the same time declining all responsibility regarding the matter. On receipt of the Mushir-ed-Dowleh's reply I at once sent a message to him to the effect that although it was no part of my duty to act as intermediary between the Persian Government and the Shah's subjects, I would proceed to His Majesty's Legation in town and read his communication to the leaders of the refugees, and try to persuade them to return to their houses. I accordingly did so. The futile answer of the Persian Government, herewith inclosed, was received with scorn and derisive remarks of "Very eloquent," "Are we children, that we should listen to such trash?"

As soon as possible after my interview with the leaders of the people I saw the Mushir-ed-Dowleh and informed his Excellency of the result of my mission. He was much amused at the reception his note had received, and although he did not say so, appeared to agree with the view taken of its contents by the refugees.

Meanwhile I had received three petitions from the refugees. These were (1) addressed to the Shah by the religious students, (2) addressed to the Shah by



native bankers (Serrafs), (3) a general Petition addressed to myself detailing their grievances and demands.

I at once forwarded these documents to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh and requested his Excellency to lay them before Shah, at the same time disclaiming all responsibility for their contents. I added that the presence of a large number of Persian subjects in His Majesty's Legation was causing grave inconvenience, and that the Persian Government would be held responsible for any damage thereby caused to our premises.

On the 24th July I again addressed a note to the Persian Government drawing attention to the serious condition of affairs, and on the 26th ultimo, by your instructions, I informed the Mushir-ed-Dowleh that it was for the Persian Government to satisfy the people now in refuge under the British flag, and so put an end to a very undesirable situation.

On the 26th July matters became so threatening that I ventured to telegraph to you that, failing your instructions to the contrary, I should ask for an audience of the Shah, who I suspected, rightly, as it subsequently transpired, with being purposely kept in ignorance of the events in town.

On the 27th ultimo I received your permission to apply for an audience. I immediately did so, and it was arranged that I should be received by the Shah on the following Monday.

On Sunday morning early the Mushir-ed-Dowleh verbally informed me that he was leaving that night for Kum with an autograph letter from the Shah granting—

1. A National Assembly.
2. Courts of Justice.
3. The return of the Mujtehed with all honour.
4. Pensions for the families of those killed in the recent riots.
5. Permission for persons exiled for participation in the reform movement to reside anywhere in Persia except in Tehran.

In conveying the above intelligence to me his Excellency gave me a message from the Shah in which His Majesty begged me to postpone my audience until the result of the Mission to Kum was known. In view of His Majesty's wishes, and having regard to the fact that I was convinced that the Persian Government had at length become aware of the danger of the situation, I complied with his Excellency's request, and I trust my action met with your approval.

On the evening of Sunday, the 29th July, I received unofficially the most welcome intelligence that the Grand Vizier had resigned, and this was officially confirmed on the following day. The Sepahdar, who commands several regiments in Tehran, had been warned by his officers that there was disaffection among the soldiers, who were threatening to join the refugees. He at once informed the Grand Vizier, who, after consultation with the Minister of War and the Minister of the Court, sent his resignation to the Shah, who at once accepted it.

The departure of the Grand Vizier was received with unmitigated joy by Persians of all ranks, except a small clique at Court, who had joined with him in plundering the people, and immediately a change for the better took place in the situation.

As I had the honour to inform you in my telegrams of the 30th ultimo and 1st August, Nos. 203 and 205, the Mushir-ed-Dowleh successively became Chief Minister ("Reis-i-Vozera") and then Grand Vizier. He at once dispatched the head of the Kajar tribe, Azad-ul-Mulk, to treat with the Mollahs at Kum, and remained himself near Tehran to carry on the government of the country.

My chief difficulty was now the fact that the refugees and their very numerous supporters had entirely lost all confidence in the Government, and declined to treat except through me. In these circumstances, I have throughout taken no important step without being personally asked to do so by the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, who, being at his wits' end, was glad enough of my assistance and advice. It is probable that at first the Persian Government imagined that what the people really desired was the fall of the Atabeg-i-Azam; but I all along warned them that this was merely one of the demands put forward, that the Government was face to face with a revolution and not a mere strike, and that if they wished to avoid a calamity they would do well to listen carefully to, and if possible grant, the reasonable demands of the people.

In view of your telegram No. 104 of the 2nd instant, it was clear that no guarantee could be given by the Persian Government through His Majesty's Legation. After a long conference with the Mushir-ed-Dowleh's son, Hussein Khan, I agreed to allow

him to visit His Majesty's Legation, when it was arranged that he should read in my presence the Shah's first Rescripts, the details of which I have given in my telegram No. 207 of the 4th August. At Hussein Khan's request I informed the leaders of the people that I could do no more for them, and I entirely declined to guarantee the execution of the Shah's "Dastkhats." I also telegraphed to the Mujtehed Seyed Abdullah at Kum urging him to return to Tehran.

The leaders of the people, after some days' consultation, declined to accept the Shah's Rescript regarding the consultative assembly, the wording of which was vague and ambiguous. Two further Rescripts on the same subject were then issued, and the second one actually printed and posted up in the town. It was torn down, and the people again declined to accept it or to leave His Majesty's Legation.

Things were now becoming very serious, and on the 9th August I was summoned to Sahibkeranieh, the Shah's summer residence, where I found the Naib-es-Sultaneh (Minister of War and brother of the Shah), the Grand Vizier, and Prince Ala-es-Sultaneh. The Naib, after warmly thanking me for all I had so far done, frankly told me that the Persian Government were in a most awkward position, and asked my advice. I recommended that I should endeavour to induce the refugees to send a deputation to the Grand Vizier, his Highness could then personally discuss the situation with them. I said that of course I must be able to guarantee that the leaders would not be molested, and the request for my intervention must come from the Persian Government. My suggestion was eagerly accepted, and on Wednesday, the 8th instant, I accompanied the leaders to the Grand Vizier's country residence.

After a long discussion, in which I took no part except when questioned, an amended Rescript was written out, and was on the 9th August signed by the Shah. The Rescript, translation of which is inclosed, orders:—

1. The institution of a National Assembly composed of Princes, members of the Kajar tribe, Nobles, landed proprietors, Mollahs, merchants, and trade guilds, representatives to be elected by each class.
2. That this Assembly shall assist the Shah's Ministers to introduce reforms, and will then submit its proposals through the Grand Vizier to the Shah to receive His Majesty's signature and be subsequently enforced.
3. That Regulations for the Assembly are to be drawn up at once by the Grand Vizier in consultation with the representatives.
4. That the Assembly shall enforce the Mahomedan law.
5. That the Rescript shall be published.

The people in "bast" at His Majesty's Legation received the news of the signature of the "Dastkhat" with great rejoicing, the document being read to them by the Grand Vizier's son in the presence of Colonel Douglas, Military Attaché at His Majesty's Legation. They dispersed the following day, leaving about 300 of their number, who are composed of the heads of guilds and of native bankers. The former will, I trust, leave on the arrival from Kum of the Mujtehed. The latter have a separate claim against the Persian Government for 70,000 toman, and may prove difficult to dislodge.

It is hardly necessary to say that the garden has suffered terribly, and that the whole Legation has been polluted by the residence for nearly a month of thousands of people—there being of course no means of adequately meeting this sudden call on our resources.

It is too soon to offer any opinion as to whether the terms of the Shah's Rescript will be carried out in the near future. In a country like Persia an elective Assembly is at present almost inconceivable; but there is no doubt whatever that the people have learnt their power, and are determined to shake off their oppressors. It is significant that there are in Tehran a large number of agitators from the Caucasus, and that events in Russia are most carefully watched.

As I had heard that the Russian Legation had been informed that I was doing my best to prevent any one taking refuge there, I thought it well to see M. Hartwig, whom I assured that such stories were pure fabrications, and that far from keeping the "bastis" to myself I should be delighted to spare him a few thousand, if they could be induced to leave our grounds.

The fact is that the Persians know very well that the Russians are themselves struggling for freedom, and that it would be useless to expect assistance from the Minister of an autocratic Power. The Russian Legation even went so far as to offer,

through the Banque d'Escompte, a toman each to the refugees; but the few who accepted the bribe were, I am told, promptly beaten by the Seyeds.

Most of my foreign colleagues have been interested spectators of the events of the last month, with the exception of the German Chargé d'Affaires, Baron Richthofen, who has tried to make such mischief as he could between His Majesty's Legation and the Persian Government. Since the fall of the Grand Vizier his claws, such as they are, have been cut, and I do not think his efforts have been attended by much success.

I am informed that the Mujtehedes arrive at Shah Abdul Azim to-morrow, and that fifty carriages have been sent out by the Government for their use.

I have the honour to inclose copies of correspondence with the Persian Government, together with a translation of the final "Dastkhat" issued by His Majesty the Shah.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure 1 in No. 135.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Mushir-ed-Dowleh.*

Your Excellency,

July 20, 1906.

I HAD the honour to inform you on Wednesday last that I had been warned that it was the intention of a number of the Shah's subjects to take "bast" in His Majesty's Legation.

Yesterday, early in the afternoon, about forty merchants and tollabs came to His Majesty's Legation in town.

I at once sent an officer of the Legation to inquire what they wanted.

I have the honour to state that they made the following reply:—

1. They said that their lives and properties were no longer secure, and that they were being persecuted by the soldiers whom the Government had thought fit to place in the bazaars.

2. The merchants complained that, in the absence of the principal Ulema, they were unable to get contracts sealed, and generally to transact their business.

3. They demand the establishment of Law Courts which must not be wholly in the hands of the officials in whom they have no confidence.

4. They decline to leave the protection of the British flag until their grievances are redressed.

I have the honour to request your Excellency to lay this note before His Majesty the Shah and to inform me of the result.

I desire to make it quite clear to your Excellency that I express no opinion as to the views and demands put forward by the persons now in "bast" in His Majesty's Legation, and take no responsibility for their presence there, which is an inconvenience to me.

Since writing the above, I have heard that there are over 300 people at His Majesty's Legation.

(Signed) E. GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure 2 in No. 135.

*Mushir-ed-Dowleh to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(Translation.)

Sir,

July 22, 1906.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your note of the 20th instant, with regard to the persons in your Legation, and I have submitted it to His Majesty the Shah, and, in answer, I have the honour to say that the Ministers of the Imperial Government greatly regret that a number of persons should, on account of certain views, have gone to the Legation and have caused trouble to your Excellency and to the Legation.

Although your Excellency is aware of the answers to the groundless complaints

of these persons, I have the honour to state them, in order to do honour to your representations in the matter, in the hope that, with your usual courtesy, you will express and explain them:—

Firstly, they say that they will not have in the future security for their persons and property, and that they are persecuted by the Government soldiers. I would inform your Excellency that, up till now, no kind of interference whatever with these people has occurred, either with their persons or their property, and the Government has had no other wish but to protect and assist them. If for some days soldiers were placed in the bazaars of the town, the only object was to protect their shops and warehouses in view of the excitement of the populace, and to allow them, by the presence of the troops, to continue their avocations without disturbance, and as soon as the excitement subsided among the populace the soldiers were withdrawn.

Secondly, with regard to the complaints of the merchants that, on account of the departure of the chiefs of the clergy, they cannot get their contracts attested, as every one knows, even if some of the chief priests have of their own accord departed with the intention of visiting the holy thresholds, the capital is not denuded of other priests who have always been referred to by the people, and a number are ready to carry out the religious functions.

Thirdly, with regard to the demand for a Court of Justice which should not be wholly in the hands of Government officials. This is a matter of surprise, as from ancient times there have always been, and now exist, in all the provinces of Persia Courts of Justice, and after any one has referred his case to the Courts of Justice it is referred from them to the Ecclesiastical Court, and whatever Shari judgment is given is carried out. It is clear that the Courts of Justice, in no State where they are official Departments of the Government Administration, are in the hands of other than Government officials.

Fourthly, with respect to their statement that they will not leave the protection of the British Government until their grievances are redressed. If the people have taken such a step in their ignorance, it is certain that your Excellency will, in view of your experience and good intention, take the necessary care of these people, and as their complaints are, as your Excellency now observes, there is no doubt that you will, in view of the friendly relations existing between the two Governments and the kindness of nature which you possess, make these people understand the folly of their actions, and assure them of the continued protection and assistance of their own Government so that they should return in all confidence and security to their avocations and trades, and not give further trouble to the British Legation.

(Signed) Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

Inclosure 3 in No. 135.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Mushir-ed-Dowleh.*

Your Excellency,

July 22, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith three Petitions, as follows:—

1. Addressed to His Majesty the Shah from the Tollabs now in "bast" at His Britannic Majesty's Legation.

2. Addressed to His Majesty the Shah from the Serrafs now in "bast" in His Britannic Majesty's Legation.

3. A general Petition addressed to myself, embodying the demands of all the persons now in refuge at His Britannic Majesty's Legation.

I have the honour to request your Excellency to lay these Petitions before His Imperial Majesty the Shah, and to take note that I decline all responsibility for their contents, which in no way concern His Majesty's Legation.

I again have the honour to point out that there are several hundreds of the subjects of His Majesty the Shah now encamped under the British flag, and to impress upon your Excellency that their presence in His Majesty's Legation is causing grave inconvenience.

I desire to add that the Persian Government will be held responsible for any damage caused by these refugees to the premises of His Majesty's Legation.

(Signed) E. GRANT DUFF.



Inclosure 4 in No. 135.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Mushir-ed-Dowleh.*

Your Excellency.

July 24, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the number of "bastis" in His Majesty's Legation at Tehran amounts to-day to 5,000 persons.

I request that your Excellency will be so good as to inform His Majesty the Shah of this, and let me know what steps the Persian Government propose to take to put an end to this serious state of affairs.

I have received intelligence that several thousand women propose to take refuge under the British flag. I am doing all I can to persuade the refugees not to allow this.

(Signed) E. GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure 5 in No. 135.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Mushir-ed-Dowleh.*

Your Excellency.

July 26, 1906.

I HAVE repeatedly had the honour to bring to your Excellency's notice the deplorable condition of affairs now prevailing at His Majesty's Legation at Tehran, where the refugees have increased this morning to 8,500.

I am now instructed by His Majesty's Government to inform your Excellency that it is for the Persian Government to satisfy the people now in refuge under the British flag, and so put an end to this very undesirable situation.

Sir Edward Grey informs me that he has had an interview with the Persian Chargé d'Affaires in London regarding the matter, and I have no doubt that Majd-es-Sultaneh has telegraphed the substance of his conversation to the Persian Government.

I desire to warn your Excellency that the persons in "bast" are becoming impatient, and trust that at a very early date His Majesty the Shah will be pleased to return a reply to their Petition transmitted by me to your Excellency.

I need not point out to your Excellency the danger of neglecting to deal effectively and quickly with a situation which may before long become a danger to the State.

I request your Excellency to place this communication before His Majesty the Shah.

(Signed) E. GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure 6 in No. 135.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Mushir-ed-Dowleh.*

(Translation.)

(Private.)

August 2, 1906.

I VISITED last night the people now in "bast" in His Majesty's Legation in Tehran, and tried to induce their leaders to send a deputation to His Majesty the Shah. They entirely declined to do so, and expressed their determination to remain in His Majesty's Legation until the Persian Government had given a suitable guarantee that the requests made in their Petition to the Shah would be granted. They further announced their intention, should their grievances not be redressed at an early date, of bringing the whole matter before the British Houses of Parliament. On Sunday last your Excellency requested me, on behalf of His Majesty the Shah, to postpone my audience, which had been fixed for Monday, the 30th ultimo.

Out of deference to His Majesty's wishes I consented to wait for four days before carrying out the instructions of His Majesty's Government.

That period will have elapsed by this evening, and unless I can receive an assurance from your Excellency that steps will be taken to induce the 14,000 people now in "bast" to leave His Majesty's Legation I shall be compelled to consider the desirability of again asking His Majesty the Shah for an audience.

Inclosure 7 in No. 135.

*Shah's Rescript as finally Amended.*

(Translation.)

To his Highness the Sadr Azam,

(After preamble respecting the Shah's good-will towards his people and the necessity for reforms in the State.)

We have decided to institute in the capital of Tehran a National Consultative Assembly, composed of representatives of the Princes, the clergy, the Kajars, the Nobles, the aristocracy, the landed proprietors, the merchants, and the trade guilds, elected by the classes above named, so that the necessary assistance may be given in consultation on affairs of the State and kingdom and on public affairs to our trusty Ministers in their endeavours to bring about reforms for the good and weal of Persia. They will be able to submit to us, in complete security and assurance, their views for the weal of the State and nation and on public affairs, and the wants of the whole people of the State, to receive our signature and to be put into execution.

Consequently you will draw up on this date, in accordance with this Rescript, the regulations and arrangements for this Assembly, as well as all the necessities for its institution, with the approval and the signatures of the representatives, so that, with the help of God, the Consultative Assembly, which is the upholder of our justice, will be opened and commence the necessary reforms in State affairs, and put into force the Holy "Shari" (ecclesiastical) laws.

We further command that a copy of this Rescript should be published and announced, in order that all our subjects should be aware of our good-will towards them, which is always directed towards the progress of the State and nation of Persia, and should continue to pray for us.

Dated the 14th Jemadi-ul-Akher, 1324 (Shah's birthday), (August 5, 1906).

[29609]

No. 136.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 262.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 3, 1906.

LOAN to Persia. See your telegram No. 202 of the 31st August.

I assume that, as several months have now elapsed since we definitely refused a loan for which the Persian Government pressed us most urgently, other sources have since then been tried; the renewed application to Russia is evidence that they have failed to obtain anything. His Majesty's Government are willing, however, to discuss the question of making an advance in common, if, in the opinion of the Russian Government, there is any danger of the money being lent by any other source on terms by which undesirable complications would be introduced into Persian questions. Mr. Grant Duff would, in these circumstances, be instructed to ascertain, in conjunction with his Russian colleague, how we can best secure that the money should be applied to objects of real necessity, and also the exact sum required.

If a loan is made now, I consider it should at any rate be confined to the bare necessities required in order to carry on for a short period. I assume that the Russian Government agrees to support the Valiuhd as successor to the Shah, and in that event a loan might enable a better start to be made with a new Government.

It would, in our opinion, however, be more useful to defer a big loan in view of the present instability of the Persian Government consequent on the uncertainty of the health of His Majesty the Shah.

[29708]

No. 137.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 207.)

Sir,

Gulshah, August 14, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the usual official reception on the occasion of the Shah's birthday took place on the 5th August at Sahib Keranie, His Majesty's summer residence.

[1660]

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The reception only lasted a very few minutes, and all the members of the Diplomatic Corps were much shocked by the Shah's appearance.

His Majesty stood leaning upon a table, while one of his Chamberlains fanned him constantly. He did not, as usual, speak personally to each Representative, but a Court official made a hurried round of the circle and murmured a few words of inquiry as to the health of the Heads of Missions.

His Majesty seemed to find considerable difficulty in speaking at all; his mouth is drawn down on one side, his breathing is difficult, and one of the foreign Representatives afterwards remarked with truth, "C'est une tête d'agonisant."

I have since heard that His Majesty was suffering from dropsy in addition to his other maladies, and that his whole body was affected as high as the elbows. From later information I hear that this has subsided, and only exists now in one foot, and that his general health has somewhat improved, but hopes are no longer held out of his ultimate complete recovery, and his doctors acknowledge that he is a dying man, though they say that he may live for months, and even for a year.

The Belgian Minister had arranged for a private audience after the general diplomatic reception on the 5th August, but His Majesty was not in a fit state to receive him, and the audience was postponed.

Some comment has been caused by the conduct of the Russian Minister on this occasion. After the reception his Excellency, attended by his staff, inspected the Russian Cossack brigade in the courtyard of the Palace to the strains of the Russian National Anthem.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

[29709]

No. 138.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 208. Confidential.)  
Sir,

*Gulahak, August 14, 1906.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 203 of the 30th July, I have the honour to transmit a Memorandum by Mr. G. Churchill, Acting Oriental Secretary of His Majesty's Legation, on the career of the new Grand Vizier. It was a matter of general surprise that his Highness accepted office, as he is well aware of the almost insuperable difficulties which he will have to encounter. It is probable that he was persuaded to accept the post by his sons, Mushir-ul-Mulk, Persian Minister at St. Petersburg, and Hussein Khan, who acts as his father's private secretary.

They are both well-educated, ambitious men, and should exercise a good influence over the Grand Vizier, especially as regards the relations between the Persian Government and foreign Powers.

Mushir-ed-Dowleh is at present also Minister of Foreign Affairs, but it is probable that he will not retain that office, which has been offered to, but not yet accepted by, the present Persian Minister in London.

I inclose his Highness' photograph, which may be of interest.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 138.

*Memorandum by Mr. Churchill respecting the Sadr Azam, Nasrullah Khan, Mushir-ed-Dowleh.*

(Confidential.)

*August 7, 1906.*

THE Mushir-ed-Dowleh was born about 1815, and is, therefore, about sixty years of age.

He originates from Nain, a district between Kashan and Yazd, where his grandfather was a member of a sect of Dervishes.

He entered the Foreign Office as a junior clerk in the seventies, and was in charge of the Russian Department for some years.

He received the title of Mushir-ul-Mulk in 1891, and being rapidly promoted by the Amin-es-Sultan, was appointed Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs about 1893.

He was subsequently appointed "Vezir Lashker," or Chief Accountant, to the War Office and held the post until 1899.

On the departure of the then Foreign Minister, Mohsen Khan Mushir-ed-Dowleh, for Europe in 1899, he took over the control of the Foreign Office from that official, and on the death of the latter the same year he was appointed Foreign Minister with the higher title of "Mushir-ed-Dowleh," which is not, however, a title officially connected with the office, as commonly supposed. His eldest son, Hassan Khan, at the same time became Mushir-ul-Mulk.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh conducted the Foreign Office for seven years, from 1899 until 1906, with considerable tact and judgment. It is a remarkable fact that although he has had practically no education, knows no foreign language, and has never left Persia, he has been able to grapple and deal with the many complicated international questions inseparable from the office he held.

During his tenure of office as Foreign Minister, the Amin-es-Sultan was Prime Minister for the first four years, and the Ain-ed-Dowleh during the last three. The first Russian loan was concluded in 1899 and the second in 1902 during his term of office. His eldest son, Mushir-ul-Mulk was, during part of the time, Persian Minister in St. Petersburg. The fact that the so-called Russian loan policy of the Amin-es-Sultan was carried on while Mushir-ed-Dowleh was Foreign Minister, and while his son was in St. Petersburg, threw him under the suspicion of being a Russophile. The fact also that he was for some years, in his early career, head of the Russian Department in the Foreign Office, gave his detractors a further opportunity of discrediting him in English eyes. The Mushir-ed-Dowleh, like most Persian statesmen, is probably governed entirely by self-interest, and hitherto he has obtained more from Russia than from England.

The mere fact that the Mushir-ed-Dowleh's two sons have received European education, are energetic and progressive in their views, is a potent factor in his favour, pointing to reforms in administration now that he has become Prime Minister.

Hassan Khan, Mushir-ul-Mulk, is about thirty-five years of age and speaks Russian and French fluently. He was in the Foreign Office under his father before his appointment to St. Petersburg, and introduced a system into that Department which it had never before known. The archives, and practically the whole system of administration, were placed upon European lines.

Hussein Khan, Motamin-ul-Mulk, is about thirty years of age, and knows French and English fairly well. He has assisted his father as Chief of the Foreign Minister's Cabinet since his return from Europe a few years ago.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh had for some months been one of the candidates for the office of Grand Vizier, but it was thought by many people that he would not accept it. He was appointed Chief of the Ministry on the 30th July and "Sadr Azam," or Grand Vizier, the following day, with the title of "Ashraf," or Highness. He retains the post of Foreign Minister for the time being.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL.

[29710]

No. 139.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 209.)  
Sir,

*Gulahak, August 16, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith the Monthly Summary of Events in Persia, which have not been recorded in separate despatches.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 139.

*Monthly Summary, August 16, 1906.*

*Tehran.*

1. LITTLE of interest has occurred in Tehran or in the provinces besides the popular movement culminating in the dismissal of the Grand Vizier, Ain-ed-Dowleh.



on the 29th ultimo, and the issue of the Shah's rescript of the 5th August, as reported upon fully in a separate despatch.

2. The Shah's birthday was celebrated on the 5th instant, and His Majesty received the Corps Diplomatique as usual. His Majesty was observed to be looking very ill, and his present condition is reported upon separately. On the evening of the 5th instant His Imperial Highness Naib-es-Sultaneh, Minister for War, the Shah's brother, gave a dinner to the Corps Diplomatique and the principal members of the European Colony. There was a display of fireworks as usual.

#### *Meshed.*

1. A Persian telegraphist at Meshed named Ovanessoff, who had been useful in the past to His Majesty's Consul-General, has been removed from his post at the instance of the Russian Legation. Ovanessoff was very unpopular with the Russians, owing to his constant opposition to their efforts to obtain undue control of the Seistan and other lines in Khorassan. His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires has approached the Minister of Telegraphs on the subject, who has promised to give Ovanessoff a good post in Tehran as compensation.

2. The son of the Persian Telegraph Director at Meshed was sent to Daragez to repair the line, and reported that the wire from Daragez entered the Russian office at Kuchan before the Persian office. This has since been altered.

3. Meshedi Yousuf, a Turk, said to hold both Russian and Persian passports, left Meshed at the end of June for Herat. He is believed to be a Russian Agent.

4. His Majesty's Acting Consul-General Reports that Captain Watson, on special duty at Birjand, complains of the attitude of the Persian doctor, Hussain Khan, and he gathers from the reports he has received that there is a good deal of pro-Russian influence at work in Birjand.

5. Three hundred camel-loads of Indian sugar have arrived at Meshed, and, as Indian sugar rarely finds its way to Meshed on account of the cheapness of Russian manufactured sugar, it is satisfactory to note the success of this venture.

#### *Turbat-i-Haidari.*

1. Captain Keyes called on Saïd-es-Sultaneh, formerly Minister of Police at Tehran, who was lately expelled from the capital by the ex-Grand Vizier. This official will probably now return to Tehran.

#### *Seistan.*

1. Lieutenant Dankes reports that on the 11th June he witnessed the punishment of the Buajaris in connection with the riots in Seistan last March and the attack on the Consulate dispensary, &c. With regard to the punishment of the ringleaders of the principal riot, negotiations are now in progress, and certain proposals have been made by Abomtahan-es-Sultaneh, the Special Commissioner sent by the Persian Government to investigate on the spot. There now seems a likelihood of this troublesome case being definitely settled.

2. The misunderstanding which had occurred between the British and Russian Consuls in Seistan relating to a dispute between their respective subjects about a plot of land has been satisfactorily arranged, after a reference to Tehran, by a friendly exchange of views on the spot.

#### *Shiraz.*

1. The Ala-ed-Dowleh has, as he anticipated, found the task of governing Fars extremely difficult owing to the intrigues of Prince Shoa-es-Sultaneh, who refuses to relinquish his ill-gotten gains there without a severe struggle. From Mr. Grahame's reports it is clear that Shoa-es-Sultaneh is making it as difficult as he can for the Ala-ed-Dowleh to restore tranquillity. It is unfortunate, however, that the Ala-ed-Dowleh seems to have been somewhat prejudiced against Mr. Grahame, and intriguers seem to have done their best to make matters worse. A telegram received on the 11th instant from Mr. Grahame shows that cordial relations have been now resumed, and the Ala-ed-Dowleh has asked Mr. Grahame to report his difficulties to the

Legation in the hope that His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires would strengthen his hands. Mr. Grant Duff has accordingly addressed the Grand Vizier on the subject, and as the people threaten again to take refuge at the Consulate in Shiraz the matter has become a serious one. It will be Mr. Grant Duff's endeavour to help the Ala-ed-Dowleh in preventing the people from again taking sanctuary at the Consulate, but the only way to do this is apparently to force the Shoa-es-Sultaneh to relinquish the Crown lands he had obtained in Fars when last Governor-General of that province.

#### *Isfahan.*

1. Mr. Barnham has had trouble with his Indian sowar escort, two of whom got married without previous sanction, and are being sent back to India.

2. Messrs. Lynch Brothers report that two of their caravans, carrying goods to Isfahan and Tehran, have been robbed on the Bakhtiari road by some Kuhgelu tribesmen. Thirty-five mules with loads, gear, and personal effects, have been robbed.

#### *Tabreez.*

1. Mr. Wratishaw reports that the conduct of the Mamash Kurds, who retired to Solduz after the occupation of Pasva by the Turks, has become so outrageous that the Persian Government is considering the advisability of removing them elsewhere. The Kurds in the districts of Mergaver and Tergaver, near Urmia, continue to be kept in order by the Turks, but those living to the north of Urmia are quite beyond control.

2. It would appear that the sympathy shown by the clergy of Tabreez with their brethren at Tehran in the recent movement was always under the control and with the approval of His Imperial Highness the Valiahd, who came to an understanding with the clergy that no demonstration should be made which would be likely to lead to riots. The Valiahd was very anxious to help in bringing about the downfall of the ex-Grand Vizier.

#### *Kermanshah.*

When the news of the Ain-ed-Dowleh's dismissal from the office of Prime Minister reached Kermanshah on the 30th ultimo, great demonstrations of joy were made, and the town was illuminated.

#### *Bagdad.*

The new Persian Consul-General, Yamin-ul-Mamalek, has been intriguing with the clergy at Kerbela. He caused some excitement by harshly treating a Persian subject who had got into trouble and had obtained the protection of one of the leading Shiah priests.

The following matters have been dealt with in separate despatches:—

No. 200	..	August 4	..	Ismaïl Yezdi case.
" 201	..	" 13	..	Assault on Ziegler's agent at Yezd.
" 202	..	" 13	..	Seistan disturbances. Proposed settlement.
" 203	..	" 13	..	His Imperial Highness the Valiahd. Attitude towards clerical movement.
" 204	..	" 13	..	Ditto ditto ditto
" 205	..	" 13	..	Saïd-ed-Dowleh. Left sanctuary at Yezd.
" 206	..	" 13	..	Tehran disturbances and refugees at His Majesty's Legation.
" 207	..	" 14	..	Shah's health.
" 208	..	" 14	..	New Grand Vizier, Mushir-ed-Dowleh.
" 210	..	" 15	..	Ex-Grand Vizier, Abu-ed-Dowleh.
" 211	..	" 15	..	Tehran disturbances.
" 212	..	" 16	..	Legation buildings.
" 213	..	" 16	..	D'Arcy Petroleum Concession.
" 214	..	" 16	..	Persian law relating to jurisdiction in cases in which foreigners are interested.
" 26	..	" 11	..	Plague in Seistan.
(Commercial)				

(Signed) E. P. CHURCHILL,  
Acting Oriental Secretary.

[29711]

No. 140.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 210.)

Sir,

*Gulahek, August 16, 1906.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 202 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to state that His Majesty the Shah has accepted the resignation of the Atabeg-i-Azam.

I inclose a Memorandum by Mr. Churchill of his Highness' career.

The downfall of the Atabeg has been received with unmixed joy all over Persia, and every one, both European and native, feels a sensation of relief.

It is difficult to say anything in his Highness' favour. On his assumption of the post of Grand Vizier in the autumn of 1903 he gave out that he would introduce elaborate reforms. Not only has he entirely failed to fulfil his promises, but he has left his country both financially and administratively in a far worse position than it was when he rose to power.

It is hardly necessary to say that British interests suffered greatly at his hands. He carried obstruction so far that since his fall Prince Ala-es-Sultaneh confidentially informed me that it was owing to the Grand Vizier's opposition that even trifling debts owing by the Shah to London tradesmen were left unpaid.

His Highness is so hated in the country that a prominent Mollah yesterday informed me that it is by no means unlikely that he will be killed. It is practically certain that he will be made to disgorge a large portion of the money he has robbed from the State and from the people.

As will be seen from the inclosed photograph his Highness is a man of striking appearance.\* He had remarkably good manners when he chose. Personally I was on good terms with him until the refusal of His Majesty's Government last winter to lend him money, a decision which he, quite unjustly, put down to my influence.

It was at all times difficult and even dangerous to do business with him owing to his unscrupulousness and mendacity, for which he was justly famed, even in a country where truth and honesty are little respected.

His whole object in life appeared to be the amassing of money. He hated Europeans, and except for one short journey last year knew nothing of foreign countries.

It is unlikely that he will again figure in Persian politics.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 140.

*Memorandum by Mr. Churchill respecting his Highness Sultan Mejid Mirza,  
Ain-ed-Dowleh, Atabeg-i-Azam.*

(Confidential.)

THE ex-Grand Vizier was born about 1847, and is therefore nearly 60 years of age.

He is a son of the late Muchul Mirza, Azad-ed-Dowleh, and a grandson of Fath Ali Shah. The title of "Azad-ed-Dowleh" has lately been conferred upon the Ain-ed-Dowleh's only son, who was formerly Shams-ul-Mulk.

His Highness was with the Shah in Tabreez before His Majesty came to the throne, and held at different times various Deputy Governorships in the Province of Azerbaijan. When His present Majesty came to the throne in 1896 the Ain-ed-Dowleh was appointed Master of the Horse. Being His Majesty's son-in-law, and a great favourite, he soon obtained higher promotion. He was appointed Governor-General of Arabistan and Laristan in 1899, and subsequently became Governor of Tehran and Minister of Crown Domains, both most lucrative posts. As a provincial Governor he showed some success, especially in dealing with turbulent tribesmen; but his excessive rapacity caused much dissatisfaction in the capital during his Governorship, which lasted till 1905. His Highness was one of the principal opponents of the Grand Vizier, Amin-es-Sultan, whose downfall he helped to bring about in September 1903, when he became head of the Government with the title of Minister of the Interior. He was promoted to the title of "Sadr Azam," or Grand Vizier, in January 1904, and

\* Not printed.

accompanied the Shah to Europe in 1905, and on His Majesty's return to Persia he received the title of "Atabeg-i-Azam," which had been formerly held by his predecessor, Amin-es-Sultan.

He created a great many enemies by his overbearing manner, and was generally disliked at Court. His only supporter was the Minister of the Court, Amir Behadur Jang, who had great influence with the Shah. The Ain-ed-Dowleh's policy was, apparently, to line his own pockets and to allow his friend Amir Behadur to do the same, but to restrain the rest of the Ministers, Governors, and hangers on with all his power. The result was that he possessed only this one supporter, who was powerful enough to keep him in office until the united opposition, with the help of the clergy and the mercantile classes, brought about his downfall through the events of the past month.

The Ain-ed-Dowleh's foreign relations during his three years' term of office were markedly characteristic of the man. He stubbornly set his face against foreign financial assistance from the outset. When face to face with the difficulties resulting from the Shah's third visit to Europe, he tentatively negotiated with both Russia and England, but his excessive caution and want of initiative rendered the negotiations abortive. He then turned to M. Naus, the Belgian Minister of Customs, but treated that official with such want of confidence that nothing came of the discussions, and Persian finances became more and more involved. The financial situation he has left for his successor to deal with is critical in the extreme, but his Highness retires to private life with an immense fortune, hated by all and regretted by none.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL.

*Gulahek, August 14, 1906.*

[29715]

No. 141.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 214.)

Sir,

*Gulahek, August 16, 1906.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a translation by Mr. Churchill and Abbas Kuli Khan of a Law promulgated by the Persian Government relating to jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases in which foreign subjects are implicated.

As you are no doubt aware, since 1828 the procedure in such cases has been governed by the Treaty of Tourkmanchai.

According to Articles VII, VIII, and IX of that Treaty, it is laid down that when a Russian subject is concerned in a civil or criminal case in which a Persian subject is also implicated, the matter is brought before the Hakim or Governor and tried in the presence of the dragoman of the Russian Mission or Consulate, as the case may be.

In practice, British cases of a similar kind have in Tehran always been tried in the Foreign Office Tribunal before a Persian official assisted by His Majesty's Vice-Consul. In the provinces such cases are heard before the Karguzar (the Foreign Office Agent) and His Majesty's Consul-General or Consul.

Nothing more unsatisfactory than the present arrangement can well be imagined. The Persian official chosen is almost invariably corrupt, has had no legal education of any kind, and few Orientals have any abstract sense of justice. The result is that the British official assisting in the hearing of a case often totally disagrees with his Persian colleague, and settlement becomes impossible.

The present law apparently transfers the Tribunal from the Persian Foreign Office, where by custom it has always sat, to a separate Court, composed of a Judge, two assistants, and a clerk. Foreign subjects will be tried before this Tribunal in the presence of their Consul or dragoman, but the Judge alone, it would seem, will pronounce sentences, which will then be carried out by the Legation of the country to which the foreign subject belongs.

This would mean that a British subject could be condemned in costs or to a term of imprisonment by a Judge usually quite ignorant of law and almost certainly bribable.

I received the Persian version of the Law from the Mushir-ed-Dowleh without a covering note of any kind. I have replied in a communication, copy of which I have the honour to forward, that I cannot accept this departure from the procedure inaugurated by the Treaty of Tourkmanchai without the instructions of His Majesty's Government, and that until such instructions are received I shall continue as heretofore



to refer to the Foreign Office Tribunal cases in which British subjects and Persians are implicated.

The Russian Minister informs me that he has declined to accept the inclosed Law.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure i in No. 141.

*Laws relating to Persian Jurisdiction in Civil and Criminal Cases in which Foreign Subjects are implicated.*

(Translation.)

In the name of God the All-merciful!

WE, by the will of God, King of Kings and Absolute Ruler of all the Kingdoms of Persia, in view of the Royal favour with which we have always regarded our faithful subjects, and in order to strengthen the edifice of friendship towards the friendly Powers who have Representatives at our Court, and in order to extend justice and to carry out the laws between our own subjects and foreigners residing in Persia, have commanded the following Articles to be drawn up and put into force:—

#### ARTICLE I.—*The Institution of a Tribunal.*

Section 1. The members of the Tribunal will be composed of one Judge (President of the Tribunal), two assistants, one clerk, and one chief attendant. In criminal cases one of the assistants will be deputed by the President to conduct an inquiry and investigation.

Sec. 2. As soon as the case arises, the President must open proceedings and preside over the Court of Inquiry in the presence of the Consul or the interpreter of the Legation to which the foreign subject who is a party in the case is amenable as a subject. The President is responsible for the issue of a judgment and its due fulfilment.

Sec. 3. Should the President of the Tribunal be unable to attend, his assistants will take his place as his delegates, and inquiry and investigation will be carried on by them. The clerk of the Tribunal is responsible for the correspondence of the Tribunal, and must be present at the inquiries and take a précis of the verbal or written depositions of witnesses, and write a précis of the case before the Court. All the records, copies, registers, and documents of the Court are in his keeping.

Sec. 4. If necessary, the clerk can have one or more assistants.

Sec. 5. The chief attendant is a servant of the Court, and will be in attendance during the inquiries and investigations. He will maintain order during the examination of witnesses and during the discussions. He will be responsible for serving the orders of the Tribunal and for summoning persons to the Court in cases where these are Persian subjects. Foreign subjects will be dealt with by their respective Legations in cases of summonses and orders.

In case of necessity the chief attendant will have one or more assistants.

Sec. 6. The Legal Counsellor of the Foreign Office will inquire into the legal aspect of cases referred to the Tribunal, or of matters submitted to that Department in accordance with the orders of the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

#### ARTICLE II.—*Attributes of the Tribunal.*

Sec. 7. In any suit where one party is a foreign subject and the other party a Persian subject, the trial of the case must be referred to the Tribunal. Suits concerning landed property between Persian and Turkish subjects must be referred to the Tribunal of the Interior. In criminal cases, if the criminal is a Persian subject, the inquiry and judgment concerns the Tribunal; if the criminal is a foreign subject, the inquiry will be held at the Tribunal. All criminal cases concerning Turkish subjects will be referred to the Tribunal of the Interior.

Sec. 8. In case it is necessary to hold a fresh trial, the Minister for Foreign

Affairs, in conjunction with the Foreign Legation to which the foreign subject party in the suit is amenable, having decided the matter, a fresh trial will be held, under the presidency of some one to be chosen by the Foreign Minister.

#### ARTICLE III.—*Arrangement of Tribunal.*

Sec. 9. The parties having a suit to bring before the Tribunal will be summoned, the Persian subjects by the Tribunal authorities and the foreign subjects by the Legations to which they are amenable.

Sec. 10. The Persian subjects will be summoned in the name of the President of the Court, but foreign subjects will be summoned by the Legation to which they are amenable, and the summons will be as follows: firstly, the date; secondly, the description of the plaintiff, personal name and family name, profession, abode and place of residence; thirdly, description of the defendant, personal and family name, profession, abode and place of residence; fourthly, the nature of the suit; fifthly, the Court decided upon; sixthly, delay allowed within which to attend.

Sec. 11. The representative of the Court or his assistant must present the summons at least three days before attendance is required at Court; but sometimes, in case of urgency, it is admissible to give shorter notice than three days; and if the residence of the defendant is not in the Province of Tehran, one day must be added to the grace allowed for attendance for each 5 farsakhs.

#### *Public Tribunal.*

#### *The Constitution of the Court and Maintenance of Order.*

Sec. 12. The parties to a suit must attend personally at the Tribunal, or send a representative duly authorized in writing; and should they wish to discuss their case between them, they are at liberty to do so, but they must not transgress the laws of politeness in doing so, and must observe respect towards the Court. They may also bring an advocate with them into Court. If the plaintiff or defendant should be a foreign subject, he must bring his Consul, or the interpreter of the Legation or of the Consulate to which he is amenable.

Sec. 13. The Court is public.

Sec. 14. Persons who are present at the Court must be silent and observe respect, and must as far as possible not interfere with the agreement or disagreement of the contending parties, the remarks of the President or advocates, or of the interpreters of the Legations.

Sec. 15. No one will be permitted to interfere in the proceedings besides the President, the advocate on either side, the Consuls or interpreters, or the persons who are present in Court for the discussion of their case.

Sec. 16. The President will be empowered to expel from the Court any person interfering in the proceedings and causing a disturbance after having called them to order unsuccessfully.

Sec. 17. The President will first invite the plaintiff or his counsel to state his case, and will, secondly, ask the defendant to put forward his defence. After that he will listen to the statement of the counsel on either side and of the Consul or interpreter of the foreign subject.

Sec. 18. When both parties, their counsel, the Consul, and interpreter have stated their cases, the President will declare the proceedings at an end.

Sec. 19. The President can order that the documents relating to the case should be temporarily deposited with him for purposes of inquiry and discussion.

#### *Respecting Inquiries.*

Sec. 20. Should the depositions of the two parties be in conflict, and should they not be able to prove their case by evidence, the President, after specifying the point at issue, will order that witnesses be called to prove the point.

Sec. 21. On the day fixed the witnesses will attend at Court, and after stating their profession, age, name, and residence will declare whether they are related to, and

the degree of their relation with either party in the suit, or whether they are in the service of either party. Further, they will undertake in writing to declare nothing but the truth. The depositions of each witness will be taken in accordance with his national or religious laws. Should it be found that a witness has committed perjury, he will be liable to punishment according to the penal or civil laws of his country. Should a witness be accused of perjury—the inquiry having been held at the Tribunal—he will be referred for punishment to his Legation.

Sec. 22. The depositions of the following persons, if proved to have been prejudiced, will be considered worthless: relations, direct or by marriage of both parties; the heir, either direct or a legatee; the partners in a case relating to the partnership; the executor in a case relating to the execution of the will; the master for the servant; the servant for the master; in general, any persons bribed or menaced by either party in the suit.

Sec. 23. The depositions of the above persons, although rejectable, will be taken without a promise on their part (to tell the truth), and the testimony will be taken as information only.

Sec. 24. The depositions of the witnesses, whether in the presence or the absence of the parties to the suit, must be heard separately, but the defendant may ask that the depositions of the witnesses be made in his presence.

Sec. 25. When witnesses are making their depositions they will not be permitted to read from notes previously prepared. The Clerk of the Court will take notes of their depositions, and will read them out to the witnesses, who must declare whether they maintain their statements.

Sec. 26. During the reading of the proceedings of the Court the witnesses may in Court make such changes or additions as are necessary for proving the truth of the case. The changes or additions will be added to the written statements either at the end or in the margin, and will be read to the witnesses, who will sign or seal the same; but if the witnesses should not be able or should not wish to sign or seal the document, the fact will be noted in the statement of the Court's proceedings.

Sec. 27. The parties to the suit have not the right to interrupt the witnesses, but after their depositions the President can make certain necessary inquiries of the witnesses at the request of either party, of their counsel, of the counsel or of the interpreter of the foreign subject in the case, or of his own accord.

Sec. 28. In all cases where the inspection of a locality is necessary to prove the statements of witnesses, especially in cases relating to boundaries, to usurpation of lands, to cases connected with "kanats" and streams, the Court will, if necessary, be transferred to the locality in question, and the witnesses will there be called to make their depositions.

#### *Inspection and Recognition of Localities.*

Sec. 29. In case it should be necessary to inspect the condition of a locality or to value the amount of damages sustained by the plaintiff, the President of the Court can order an inspection, either by himself or by one of his assistants, in the presence of both parties.

Sec. 30. If in inspecting a locality or valuing the damages the President should find certain outside information necessary, he may take to the spot two or more experts to advise him.

#### *Investigations relating to Writings and Seals.*

Sec. 31. The President of the Court may, if necessary, investigate writings and seals.

Sec. 32. The above investigations having been ordered, the papers of which the writing and seals require investigation, will be submitted in Court to an expert appointed by the President, who will proceed to investigate in the presence of the Consul or interpreter of the foreign subjects.

#### *The Decisions of Experts.*

Sec. 33. Should the report of an expert be necessary, the same will be especially ordered, and the subject of the report will be stated.

Sec. 34. When the President issues an order declaring the necessity of an expert

opinion, and the two parties to the suit decide upon one or more experts, the same order will approve of the same.

Sec. 35. Should the two parties not agree as to the nomination of experts, their nomination will rest with the President, and in this case the President will give their names to the Legation of the foreign subject in the case.

Sec. 36. The experts must undertake to give an entirely truthful opinion without prejudice or fear.

Sec. 37. The experts can be disqualified for the same reasons as witnesses (sections 22 and 23).

Sec. 38. The experts may not be disqualified unless they are chosen by the President.

Sec. 39. The party to the suit desiring to disqualify an expert must do so with proper proof before the expert has made his report. He must either prove the disqualification personally or with witnesses; otherwise, after the submission of the report, an expert will not be permitted by the Court to be disqualified.

Sec. 40. The disqualification may be contested. In this case the President will investigate the objections in the presence of the Consul or interpreter of the foreign subject, and can demand proofs by the production of witnesses.

Sec. 41. If the disqualification of the experts is accepted, the President will order their dismissal, and will himself appoint one or more new experts.

Sec. 42. If an expert does not accept his nomination, or if he does not appear on the appointed day and hour, the parties to the suit will agree to the nomination of another, or otherwise the President can appoint an expert under the above conditions.

Sec. 43. The experts will come to a decision by majority, and will only supply one report.

Sec. 44. The original report of the experts must be kept in the archives of the Court.

Sec. 45. Should the Court consider the expert report insufficient or useless, erroneous or false, one or more new experts may be appointed on the above conditions, and the new experts may make certain necessary inquiries from the previous experts.

#### *Judgments.*

Sec. 46. The judgment of the Court must be given immediately in the presence of the parties to the suit; but the President of the Court may, if inquiries into the case are necessary, postpone judgment until after the inquiry.

Sec. 47. The judgment will state the name of the President of the Court, the names, professions, and residences of the parties to the suit, a summary of their statements and their proofs, a summary of the inquiry, and the reasons for the judgment.

Sec. 48. The judgment must be signed by the President of the Court and by the Clerk of the Court, and the same noted in the minutes of the proceedings.

Sec. 49. The Clerk may give copies of the judgments to any one who asks for them.

Sec. 50. The parties to the suit must be informed of the judgment arrived at after the sitting in their absence, and they will be supplied with a copy of the judgment.

#### *ARTICLE IV.—Penal Court.*

Sec. 51. Persian and foreign subjects who have been subject to an assault or crime can apply for proceedings and for compensation, and can have their cases heard by the President of the Court or his assistant, who is also empowered to try the case, and can claim the amount of compensation (see section 7).

Sec. 52. The cases of foreign subjects must be referred to the Minister for Foreign Affairs by the Legation to which the plaintiff is amenable, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs will inform the President of the Court (see section 7).

Sec. 53. A Persian subject who has been subjected to a crime or an assault by a foreign subject can lay his claim before the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the latter must see to the due reparation for the offence in direct communication with the Legation to which the foreign subject is amenable.



*The Hearing of Witnesses.*

Sec. 54. The assistant deputed to hear the case must summon to the Court the persons indicated by the plaintiff, or the persons who have cognizance of the assault or crime or its consequences. Foreign subjects will be summoned by the Legations to which they are amenable.

Sec. 55. Persian witnesses will be summoned by the representatives of the Court, and will be heard separately by the investigator aided by a clerk. Witnesses who are foreign subjects will be summoned by their Legations.

Sec. 56. The depositions of witnesses must be in conformity with section 21. The investigator who holds the inquiry will inquire the personal name, family name, age, profession, and residence of the witness; and will make inquiries to satisfy himself that he is not disqualified by Article 22. The questions and answers of witnesses will be noted.

Sec. 57. The statements of the witnesses will be signed by the investigator and clerk, and the other Regulations are in accordance with sections 26 and 27.

Sec. 58. No additions between the lines are permissible in the written depositions of the witnesses. All erasures and marginal notes must be signed by the Judge, investigator, and clerk as well as the witness himself. Additions between the lines, marginal notes, and erasures not countersigned will be considered null.

*Interrogation of Accused and Offenders.*

Sec. 59. The assistant of the Court who holds the inquiry may proceed to the house of the accused, make certain investigations, look into his papers and documents, and in general make any inquiries necessary for the purpose of elucidating the truth. Should the accused be a foreign subject the inquiry will be made in the presence of the representative of the Consulate or Legation to which he is amenable.

Sec. 60. If it should be found that the accused has hidden his documents or papers, the investigator may, in accordance with the foregoing section, proceed to investigate, but in doing so he must so arrange as to do nothing which might be prejudicial to the honour and status of the defendant.

Sec. 61. If the accused is a Persian subject the investigator will summon him, and if a foreign subject he will be summoned by the Legation to which he is amenable. Should there be secret proofs of the guilt of the accused, and he should not appear in Court, the investigator may use any necessary scheme in order to prevent the accused from evading justice. In the case of a crime the investigator will immediately arrest the criminal, if a Persian subject, and imprison him.

Sec. 62. If the accused is a foreign subject the Legation to which he is amenable will be asked to detain him.

Sec. 63. The investigator will inform the accused of the accusation against him, and will proceed to conduct the interrogation in the presence of his counsel should he have chosen one. The accused may demand that his witnesses should not be asked to depose (*sic*).

Sec. 64. The investigator may himself order the carrying out of any steps necessary to elucidate the truth, and especially to have the accused medically examined in order to fix the degree of his responsibility, or in order to fix the amount of damages owing to the plaintiff's being prevented from attending his work. The damages must be estimated according to the personal standing of the plaintiff, and the medical evidence will be followed with respect to the above-mentioned plaintiff.

Sec. 65. The investigator will keep the President of the Court informed of all documents and inquiries connected with the preliminary investigation. All the documents relating to the case will be collected in a special "dossier" in the secretariat of the Court and registered, so that when necessary the accused or his counsel, the Consul or interpreter of his Legation, or the plaintiff may refer to them. When the Court decides that the accusation against the accused is founded, and considers it necessary to prosecute him, he must be summoned without an intermediary should he be a Persian subject, and through the Legation to which he is amenable should he be a foreign subject.

*Presence of Accused at the Tribunal.*

Sec. 66. The summons to accused persons will be in conformity with sections 10 and 11.

Sec. 67. The person summoned must appear in person, but he may bring a counsel. Should he not appear, the judgment will be given in default. Should the plaintiff or accused be a foreign subject, his Consul or the interpreter of his Legation must be present in Court in accordance with sections 13, 14, 15, and 16.

*Procedure of Investigation.*

Sec. 68. The witnesses who deposed at the preliminary inquiry will again make their depositions. Afterwards the plaintiff will state his case, and the accused must state his answer, and if his witnesses are accepted he must produce them. After that the President of the Court will immediately render his judgment; but he may give his judgment after making further full inquiries into the case.

Sec. 69. The witnesses must make their depositions in accordance with section 21. Their statements will be noted in the account of the proceedings. Their personal and family names, age, occupation, and residence will also be noted.

Sec. 70. The disqualification of witnesses will be in accordance with sections 22 and 23.

*Judgments.*

Sec. 71. The rendering of judgments will be in accordance with sections 42 to 50, inclusive.

Sec. 72. In case the condemned person is a Persian subject, the President of the Court will give orders for his immediate arrest.

*Oppositions to Judgments in Default.*

Sec. 73. A person condemned in default may appeal against the judgment, and such appeal must be made in writing to the Court; the time for such appeal, in case the defendant is on the spot, will be ten days; and if not on the spot, a further delay of one day for every three farsakhs will be allowed after the judgment has been delivered. This is on condition that the defendant cannot adduce an excuse in accordance with "shar" (Islamic law) which is always to be accepted.

The above law is applicable at the Tribunal in Tehran and at the Tribunals of the Karguzars in other provinces in Persia.

Our Minister for Foreign Affairs must inform the Ministers Plenipotentiary accredited to our Court that from the date of signature of these laws they will be put strictly into force.

Inclosure 2 in No. 141.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Mushir-ed-Dowleh.*

Your Highness,

August 15, 1906.

YOU were recently so good as to communicate to me a copy of a Law, promulgated by order of His Majesty the Shah, relating to civil and criminal cases in which foreign subjects are implicated.

As the above Law affects the procedure laid down in the Treaty of Tourkmanchai which at present governs cases in which British and Persian subjects are implicated, I have the honour to inform your Highness that I am unable to accept it without previous reference to His Majesty's Government.

Until I receive the decision of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, I shall continue, as before, to refer cases in which British subjects are concerned to the Foreign Office Tribunal.

[29798]

No. 142.

*Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 601.)

Sir,

*Therapia, August 28, 1906.*

ON receipt of your telegram No. 133 of the 18th instant, I directed Mr. Lamb to inquire of the Minister for Foreign Affairs what basis there might be for the statements contained in the telegram from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran to the effect that the Turkish Frontier Commissioner had retired to Sulimanieh, and that Ottoman officials were levying taxes in Mergawar.

Tewlik Pasha replied that both statements were absolutely unfounded. The Turkish Commissioner had, indeed, made a suggestion that he should be permitted to return to Mosul, and that the Persian Commissioners might follow him there for the purpose of negotiation, but this suggestion had at once been recognized to be absurd. Instructions had accordingly been telegraphed to him immediately, pointing out that the work of the Commission could only be carried on on the spot, and directing him to remain at Passova and proceed at once with the joint deliberations.

As to the reported collection of taxes in Mergawar, his Excellency gave a positive assurance that the inquiries which had been made had shown that there was no foundation for such a statement.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

[29699]

No. 143.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)*

(No. 229.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 2, 1906.*

THE Persian Government are said here to have applied for a loan to St. Petersburg a fortnight ago, and to be still awaiting the Russian Government's reply.

(Secret.)

M. Naus openly made a statement to the above effect not long ago, and it was confirmed by high officials of the Court. If this story is true, the Grand Vizier's conduct in the matter of the Meshed-Seistan line would be accounted for.

The Government will collapse altogether if it does not raise money somewhere before long.

[30020]

No. 144.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 4.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copies of telegrams relative to the introduction of arms into His Majesty's Consulate at Seistan.

*India Office, September 3, 1906.*

Inclosure 1 in No. 144.

*Mr. Morley to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*India Office, August 31, 1906.*

ARMS for Seistan Consulate. On the 28th instant following telegram was addressed to Grant Duff by Foreign Office:

"Representations regarding introduction of men and arms into British Consulate at Seistan have been made by Persian Minister. Latter states that one of Customs officials was beaten, and also that soldiers threatened to fire on them. I should be glad to receive report as to truth of this statement."

Inclosure 2 in No. 144.

*Government of India to Consul Macpherson.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*September 1, 1906.*

ARMS for Seistan Consulate. Please refer to your letter of the 10th ultimo. Local authorities should be referred by you to the Central Government, to whom British Legation will doubtless be able to explain matters, and, if you have not already done so, you should report matter fully to Tehran. The urgency of the case due to attack on Consulate was the reason why Persian Government were not informed before dispatch. It is clear that removal of arms brought in by Russian authorities had not been carried out, as mentioned in Mushir-ed-Dowleh's note of the 3rd November, 1905, since recent disturbances showed that Russian Consulates at Meshed and Seistan were fully supplied. Greatest care seems to have been taken to prevent risk of conflict during passage of arms through cultivated areas, and that there was no question of overpowering Persian local forces is proved by fact that escort sent with arms consisted merely of six levies and ten men required to complete strength of Consular escort. Matter appears to have been carried out with discretion by all concerned, though it is unfortunate that, owing to absence of telegraph line, no intimation of dispatch of arms could reach you before you were informed by Officer Commanding, Robat, that he found their immediate dispatch desirable.

Above should be repeated to Meshed by you.

(Repeated to Tehran and Secretary of State for India.)

Inclosure 3 in No. 144.

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*September 2, 1906.*

ARMS for Seistan Consulate. Your telegram dated the 31st ultimo. Reference is invited to my telegram of the 1st instant to Consul, which has been repeated to you. Native Vice-Consul at Kuh-i-Malik-Siah denies that force was used or threatened, but some parley appears to have taken place between that officer and the Customs employés when caravan was passing Hurmak.

(Repeated to Tehran.)

[30019]

No. 145.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 4.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 3rd September, relative to the concession to Russia of the control of the Meshed-Seistan telegraph line.

*India Office, September 3, 1906.*

Inclosure in No. 145.

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*September 3, 1906.*

PLEASE refer to telegrams dated the 29th and 30th ultimo from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran. Concession might affect our security for Persian loans of 1903 and 1904, which in second case are secured on Persian ports and telegraphs, and is opposed to repeated assurances of Persian Government. We trust, therefore, that every effort will be made to prevent its final grant to Russia. British interests in Eastern Persia would be immediately prejudiced by Russian possession of lines and increase of Russian telegraphic officials consequent thereupon; while excuse for constructing roads and posting Russian guards would be afforded by wild nature of the country. Inasmuch as undemarcated section of Afghan frontier is flanked by this



line, that would be open to special objection, and we might be involved in costly protective measures in view of our interests in Seistan and our obligations in connection with that frontier. Instead of proceeding to Seistan, it is clear from Kennion's telegrams of the 29th July and the 8th ultimo to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran that Persian Cossacks, over whom Russian officers exercise *de facto* control, have been posted along whole length of Perso-Afghan border as far as Barabad in the south, and are intended apparently to be kept there permanently, as they are not required for purposes of quarantine. Some local excitement and some strengthening of Afghan posts have resulted from this.

It is suggested that one of following three courses should be adopted:—

1. That maintenance of *status quo ante* Turbat-i-Haidari Russian cordon should be urged upon Russian and Persian Governments. In this connection it may be mentioned that, with a view to stop the incessant Consular rivalry in these regions, we propose to suggest to His Majesty's Government the acceptance of a self-denying ordinance by Russia and Great Britain with this object.

2. Non-extension of active Russian influence south of line from Kain to Khanikin having been recognized throughout discussions on our respective spheres in Persia, we recommend that, provided cession by Persia to foreign Power of the control of this line is necessary, control of telegraph at northern border of Kain should be divided, Great Britain obtaining whole of southern section and Russia the northern.

3. Persia might be requested by us, in the event of Russia refusing to consent to either of two above alternatives, that, in exchange for control by us of whole of Meshed-Seistan line, control of whole line from Meshed to Tehran should be transferred to Russia. Latter line, which belongs to Persia, is worked, for an annual sum of 20,000 rupees, by the Indo-European Telegraph Department.

Perpetual source of worry on Perso-Afghan frontier would be got rid of by third course, by which telegraphic connection between Meshed and Tehran entirely under her own control would be given to Russia, and all M. Hartwig's objections would apparently be met. Effect on Afghans of even temporary control by Russia of southern part of Meshed-Seistan line would probably be most injurious and, as far as India is concerned, value of any understanding with Russia would thereby be seriously diminished. We therefore earnestly hope that this eventuality may in any case be averted.

[30185]

No. 146.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 5.)*

(No. 205.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 5, 1906.

PERSIA. Your telegram No. 262.

I informed M. Isvolsky of your views respecting loan, which he apparently agreed.

He is sending instructions to M. Hartwig to co-operate with Mr. Grant Duff in obtaining information as to the amount of advance really required, and in ascertaining what means can best be employed to insure its proper application.

[29699]

No. 147.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 125.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 5, 1906.

SEE telegram No. 202 of the 31st August from St. Petersburg, respecting the proposed loan to Persia, and my reply.

Pending the receipt of further instructions you should take no action in the matter.

[29687]

No. 148.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 126.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 5, 1906.

SEE your telegram No. 228 of the 1st instant respecting arms for Seistan.

In reply to the representations of the Persian Chargé d'Affaires, I have informed him that the report that soldiers had threatened to fire on Customs officials was not true; that no one was beaten; and that the caravan which the Indian soldiers were escorting was conveying arms required, in view of the two recent attacks, for the protection of His Majesty's Consulate.

[30289]

No. 149.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 6.)*

(No. 234.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 6, 1906.

SITUATION in Tehran.

It is said that the Russian Legation are making active efforts to induce the Shah to upset the recently granted constitution. Their reasons for this attitude are said to be that British prestige in Persia has been immensely increased by the fact of the people having come to His Majesty's Legation, and also the fear that if an Elective Assembly comes into being here difficulties will arise in the Caucasus.

Excitement is being caused in town by the presence of the late Grand Vizier, who has returned to this neighbourhood.

The people have drawn up Regulations for the Assembly, and they will be submitted to-day to the Shah. It is stated that if His Majesty refuses to sign them the events of last month will be repeated, but that on this occasion they will take a less mild form.

A most serious situation may arise if the Shah attempts to reinstate the late Grand Vizier.

It is doubtful whether the Persian Government could prevent the people resorting to His Majesty's Legation, but I am warning the Grand Vizier that they may attempt to do so again.

I hope to discuss the situation with the Russian Minister to-day.

The Shah, it must be remembered, is practically an imbecile, and the small clique of persons in whose hands he is are interested in running the Government on the present autocratic lines.

[30369]

No. 150.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 7.)*

(No. 235.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 7, 1906.

MY telegram No. 231.

The Shah having refused to affix his signature to the Regulations for the National Assembly, twenty-five of the popular leaders are again in "bast" at His Majesty's Legation. In order to prevent the mob getting in I have ordered the gates to be closed, but I cannot keep the people out if they force an entry, as they threaten to do.

The demands of the leaders are—

1. The exile of the late Grand Vizier, the Minister of the Court, and two other officials with reactionary sympathies.
2. The signature of the Regulations for the National Assembly.

The persons mentioned in the first demand are the chief obstruction to any improvement in the situation, and the Russian Minister, whom I have just seen, promises to co-operate with me in obtaining their exile. We have further agreed that, in the event of our representations to the Persian Government proving unsuccessful, we shall ask for a joint audience of the Shah.

[1660]

The Persians strongly maintain that the Russian Minister is opposed to the reform movement, but he himself denies this. Could the views of the Russian Government on this point be ascertained?

Late last night I addressed a strong note to the Grand Vizier, and I am just going to see his Highness.

[30179]

No. 151.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 272.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, September 7, 1906.*

AFGHANISTAN and Persia.

See Sir C. Hardinge's private letter of the 5th instant to you.

You may open a discussion on the first-named subject with M. Isvolsky, on the basis of the instructions inclosed in the above letter.

His Majesty's Government will, you should also inform him, be ready—without waiting till the conclusion of the discussion on Afghanistan—to receive any proposals which he may put forward with regard to Persian affairs, if he desires to discuss that subject.

[30019]

No. 152.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 274.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, September 7, 1906.*

PLEASE see telegram from Tehran, No. 227 of the 1st instant, respecting the transfer of the Meshed-Seistan telegraph line to Russian control.

You should point out to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs at an early opportunity that an important modification of the *status quo*, which we have recently been so careful to maintain in Persia, will have been created if this news is confirmed. It will become necessary for His Majesty's Government to consider what counter-concession they may be compelled to demand if, as they can hardly believe, M. Isvolsky has authorized such a step.

A possible solution of the question seems to be contained in the Viceroy's telegram of the 3rd instant (suggestion 3), to which I would draw your attention; unless the matter can be adjusted by discussion with the Russian Government, a change in the control of this line, which runs so close to the frontier of Afghanistan, will require some counter-step on the part of His Majesty's Government to secure their interests.

[30289]

No. 153.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 130.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, September 7, 1906.*

SITUATION in Tehran.

See your telegram No. 254 of yesterday.

Do all you can to dissuade refugees. It is very desirable that a repetition of the recent incursion into the Legation grounds should be prevented.

[30469]

No. 154.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 8.)*

(No. 213. Confidential.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 8, 1906.*

PERSIAN Finances.

M. Isvolsky called upon me to-day to inform me that, according to information which he believed to be reliable, *partipakers* were in progress between the Persian Government and a German bank, having in view the immediate advance of a sum of

about 800,000*l.*, without guarantee, and, further, for a prospective loan of about 2,500,000*l.*, the latter to be accompanied by guarantees and concessions. These were to include the establishment of a German bank in Persia. His Excellency said he was sure the negotiations were in progress, although the actual figures might be exaggerated, and he regarded it as essential that no time should be lost by the British and Russian Governments in blocking the project by making an advance in common. He thought the matter pressing. I promised to telegraph at once to you, and beg for an early reply. M. Isvolsky spoke in strict confidence.

[30470]

No. 155.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 8.)*

(No. 214.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 8, 1906.*

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs spoke to me this evening with regard to the Meshed-Seistan telegraph. His Excellency spoke spontaneously, and, I am sure, in good faith. He read me a telegram from the Russian Ambassador in London, reporting a conversation with Sir C. Hardinge, and assured me that this was the first he had heard of the project in question. He had made inquiry in his Department, and had been told that the Russian Minister, on his own initiative, had come to some arrangement with the Persian Telegraph Administration as to an interchange of apparatus, but the question being of a minor technical character it had not been considered of sufficient importance to be submitted to him. He inquired what I knew of the matter.

I answered that I had heard that a concession to take complete control of the line had been given, or was on the point of being given, to Russia, and that, this being a disturbance of the *status quo*, had naturally caused some surprise. I added that I was expecting a telegram which would enable me to speak to him on the subject, and that I would call on him when I had received it.

His Excellency said that he had never heard of so large a measure as I had indicated, and that he would never allow any disturbance of the *status quo*. By the time of my visit, he said, he would have more information on the subject, and that the matter had come as a complete surprise to him.

[30471]

No. 156.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 8.)*

(No. 215.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 8, 1906.*

MESHED-SEISTAN telegraph.

With reference to my telegram No. 114, just dispatched, I would suggest that I should not offer any compromise to Minister for Foreign Affairs, but ask him to drop all question of taking over the above line in view of what his Excellency said in his conversation with me reported to you in my above-mentioned telegram.

[30185]

No. 157.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 131.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, September 8, 1906.*

PROPOSED loan to Persia.

See my telegram No. 262 to Sir A. Nicolson of the 3rd, and his No. 205 of the 5th instant.

You may now concert with your Russian colleague, as proposed in my above-mentioned telegram, but your action must be confined to co-operation with him in providing the information indicated. You must be careful to avoid committing His Majesty's Government in any way to a loan.



[30473]

No. 158.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 9.)*

(No. 237.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 9, 1906.*

PROPOSED Anglo-Russian loan.

Your telegram No. 131.

I to-day received a visit from the Russian Minister, who discussed the money question with me.

The following is the course that we agreed to suggest to our respective Governments:—

1. The loan of a large sum to the Persian Government would, in view of the chaos prevailing here, be imprudent.
2. In order to meet immediate necessities a combined advance should be made. About 400,000*l.* would probably suffice, but careful inquiries would be necessary.
3. The advance should be paid in, one-half to the Russian Bank, and the other half to the Imperial Bank of Persia.
4. Persian Government to notify both Legations before drawing on the sums deposited.
5. Persian Government to render strict accounts, at intervals to be subsequently agreed upon, to both Legations.
6. No part of the joint advance to be utilized for paying off debts due to the banks in question.

We should also have to insist on the money being applied to relieve real necessities. The greater part of it would be squandered if we did not take some such precaution. The late Grand Vizier has started for Khorassan.

[30504]

No. 159.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 10.)*

(No. 575.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, September 1, 1906.*

M. ISVOLSKY sent me word yesterday afternoon that he would like to call upon me, as he wished to speak to me on certain matters. His Excellency paid me a visit in the course of the afternoon, and said that he wished to inform me that the Persian Government had been pressing the Russian Minister at Tehran to procure for them an immediate advance of 3,000,000 tomans (about 500,000*l.*), and also a loan of 10,000,000 tomans (about 1,650,000*l.*). They had stated to M. Hartwig that their financial condition was exceedingly precarious, and that if his Government would render them the above service, they would subscribe to any conditions which might be required. They further added that the British Government had been offering them financial assistance in return for concessions of a political character, but that they preferred to address themselves in the first instance to the Russian Government. They intimated that if neither the Russian nor the British Government were disposed to assist them they would apply to Germany.

M. Isvolsky said that Sir C. Spring-Rice had written a private note to Count Lamsdorff in January last, which had remained without a written reply; but that on the note, which M. Isvolsky produced from his portfolio, Count Lamsdorff had written a Minute to the effect that he had informed Sir C. Spring-Rice verbally that the Russian Government were in accord with the principles enunciated in his communication.

M. Isvolsky observed that he wished to act in harmony with the spirit of what he termed the "tacit agreement" of January last, and he had therefore communicated to me the steps which the Persian Government had recently taken. There was, he said, little doubt that the financial condition of Persia was almost desperate, and that he wished to consult with His Majesty's Government as to the best means of affording relief, and in what measure assistance could be rendered. He would be glad to know what information I had received in regard to the financial situation in Persia, and also what were the views of His Majesty's Government on the subject.

I told M. Isvolsky that, in the first place, I was sure that my Government would

highly appreciate the loyal and frank step which he had been good enough to take; and that, in the second place, I could assure him that no offer of any kind had been made to the Persian Government on our part, and that their assertion that financial relief had been tendered was an old device of the Persian authorities. I had no special data at that moment in my memory as to the financial condition of Persia, but that I had little doubt that it was extremely unsatisfactory. I did not know what view you would take as to the best means of overcoming the financial difficulty, but it seemed to me that it would be desirable, in the first place, to obtain some expert and trustworthy information as to the amount which would be needed to meet the most pressing necessities, and that then the two Governments might consult together as to whether an advance might not be made in common. Perhaps it might be found necessary to have some control as to the expenditure of the advance, if one were made, as otherwise the funds might be squandered uselessly. I added that it would be better if the Persian Government could be restrained from applying to other quarters, such as Germany, for financial assistance.

To this latter remark M. Isvolsky fully agreed, and said that, as both Russia and Great Britain had large interests in Persia, it was desirable that they should work together without the intervention of third parties. His Excellency said that these and other matters concerning the present situation in Persia which Sir C. Spring-Rice and M. Hartwig might discuss were not to prejudice any arrangement which the Governments of Great Britain and Russia might hereafter conclude in regard to our future respective relations and attitude towards the general question of Persia. I said that this was also, I knew, the view of my Government.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[30724]

No. 160.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 10.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated 7th September, relative to the Meshed-Seistan telegraph line.

*India Office, September 8, 1906.*

Inclosure in No. 160.

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*September 7, 1906.*

WE wish to point out, in supplement to our telegram dated 3rd instant respecting Seistan-Meshed telegraph, that position we desire to claim on this line, namely, control and joint share with Persia, is no better than that which we already enjoy in regard to Central Persian and Meshed-Tehran lines. Persia now has right to third line on Central Persian telegraph, and could, should she desire it, have similar right on Seistan-Meshed line. Messages between Tehran and Eastern Persia could be sent round our Meshed-Seistan and Central Persian line, and transmittal of news would therefore not be endangered by transfer of Meshed-Tehran line to Russia.

We suggest that action should be taken in accordance with the views of the military authorities, who consider that No. 3 would be preferable to No. 2 of the courses proposed in our telegram of the 3rd instant. They advocate vigorous resistance to transfer of telegraph on the ground that risk of transfer of Seistan to Russia would be involved. Question of demand for concessions on Bunder Abbas-Seistan line, recommended in my telegram of 9th January, 1906, will be considered separately in connection with the question of loan which, in consequence of news reported in telegram of 2nd instant from Grant Duff, may again become pressing. Military authorities advise that, should the second course proposed in my telegram of the 3rd instant be adopted, such a demand should be put forward to meet Russian advance southwards.

(Repeated to Tehran.)

[1660]

2 K.

[30792]

No. 161.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 10.)*

(No. 238.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 10, 1906.*

I AM informed by the Russian Minister that he hears from St. Petersburg that negotiations are on foot for the establishment here of a German bank. 200,000*l.* is the figure mentioned as the capital of this enterprise.

We are causing inquiries to be made.

[30471]

No. 162.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 282.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, September 10, 1906.*

MESHED-SERISTAN telegraph line.

See my telegram No. 274 of the 7th, and your Nos. 214 and 215 of the 8th instant.

You should act on the instructions in my telegram, but if it is possible to re-establish the *status quo* without it, you need not suggest compromise.

[30816]

No. 163.

*Messrs. Lynch Brothers to Foreign Office.—(Received September 11.)**3, Suters' Hall Court, Cannon Street, London,**September 10, 1906.*

Sir,

ON behalf and at the request of the Boards of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company and the Persian Transport Company, for whom we act as agents in Persia, we have the honour to lay before you in a collective despatch some of the gravest of the obstacles and restrictions which render the operations of both these Companies in Persia wholly unprofitable to themselves, and of greatly diminished assistance to the trade of Great Britain and India. The change of Ministry in Persia, the new temper displayed by the Government, the great possibilities that are now open to our own policy in Persia in the abeyance of Russian influence, and while as yet that of Germany has scarcely risen above the Persian horizon—these considerations, coinciding with the recent appointment of a new British Minister to Persia, who is just about to take up his duties, have seemed to justify a strong hope that the time may now have arrived when the fetters at present existing upon British trade with Persia may be removed to the benefit of both countries.

In many communications, and notably in a despatch of the 18th October, 1905, we have indicated the nature of the barrier erected against trade with the Karun provinces by means of constant embargoes on the export of grain. We are pleased to record that the efforts of His Majesty's Legation have been successful in obtaining for the time being a removal of these embargoes. There is little doubt that attempts will be made from time to time by interested parties to have these regulations reimposed; and we trust that His Majesty's Legation, in the interests of trade, will strenuously endeavour to secure their permanent removal, for cultivators will not venture to extend largely the area of land under cultivation until they feel some confidence that this vicious system of embargoes has been definitely abandoned.

The condition of our road across the Bakhtiari country causes us grave anxiety. We are convinced that no solution will prove satisfactory that does not provide for its maintenance by ourselves. Any difficulties which His Majesty's Legation may at present experience in dealing with the Chiefs would, we believe, be greatly mitigated, perhaps entirely removed, if these potentates could rely on the good offices of His Majesty's Government in their periodical differences with the Central Government of Persia and on the ability of His Majesty's Government to render them useful assistance of this nature. There are also other important questions connected with this particular enterprise which have not yet been satisfactorily settled.

In a despatch of the 2nd April, 1906, we set before you our claim for a right to levy tolls on the Kum-Sultanabad road. We have since executed certain further works

suggested by His Majesty's Legation and the Persian Minister of Roads, and the latter has recently inspected and approved the condition of the road; but the right to levy tolls has not yet been granted. Fresh excuses and fresh demands are continually being made, although the same Minister of Roads informed the Imperial Bank of Persia some years ago that the expenditure of a very small sum on the road in connection with some little improvements which he mentioned would be sufficient to insure tolls being granted. Since then we have spent sums many times in excess of the sums in view at that time; and still the same evasions continue, practically arresting the Transport Company's operations in Persia.

During the last fifteen years we have maintained a steamer service on the Upper Karun in order to develop the trade of that region on behalf of the Persian Government. Owing to the exactions and opposition of the local officials and the incapacity of the Persian Government to maintain order amongst the Arabistan and Luristan tribes, which dominate the inland communications with Shushter, that has been a small yearly deficit on the working account of the "Shushan," which has never been met by the Persian Government, for whose account we run the vessel as above mentioned. These deficits now in the aggregate amount to a large sum. The Government is encouraging a Persian Company to run an opposition service and appear to be according it every facility. In that case there will be little immediate hope of our being able to wipe out these deficits from future surpluses, and we shall be constrained to press our claim on the Persian Government for payment of the outstanding debt.

We have been endeavouring for fifteen years to obtain a site at Shellilieh, near Shushter, on which to erect a shed for stowing cargo carried by the steam-ship "Shushan," instead of depositing the cargo on the bank. We have been offered a lease of a suitable plot of land having a river frontage of some 90 yards, but the present owners are unable to complete the instrument without the consent of the Persian Government, and the latter refuse that consent on the ground that a clear space of 30 zars back from the river bank must be reserved. We maintain that this space of 30 zars (or metres) is too great, and requires our shed to be placed too far back for purposes of handling cargo to or from the steamers; but while demanding unrestricted use of our proposed property down to the river bank, we are prepared to reserve a sufficient space along the river front for the legitimate passage of the public at proper times, should this be the object the Persian Government have in view. As the Persian Company will be under no restrictions as to ownership or leasing of land, they will have a great advantage over us unless this grievance can be removed. Unrestricted access to the bank of the river is absolutely essential for the proper conduct of our operations in such a country as Persia.

Our operations on the Karun are much hampered by the inadequate service and high charges in force on the tramway between Bunder Nasserri and Ahwaz. A Persian subject, the Mouin-el-Tejar, holds a Concession for this enterprise, in which it is explicitly stated that the Firman is granted in order to facilitate trade in that region. We consider that we have some right to demand that either the service be improved or that it be open to us to establish an alternative means of transport at this place.

We believe we could construct and use to advantage a short tram-line between Shushter and Shellilieh, the point where river navigation ceases to be practicable. The line would be about 6 miles long. Such a project, linking a town with its adjacent villages or port, would not, we think, be contrary to the Russo-Persian Railway Convention; and, in view of the change which is reported now to be taking place in Russian views regarding Persian affairs, we beg to inquire whether an application for such a Concession as we have mentioned would be considered.

In conclusion, we pray you to impress upon His Majesty's Minister in Persia a consideration of the importance of liberal support to these enterprises with which we are connected. We are endeavouring to link the Tehran-Kum road with the ports in the Persian Gulf, in order to make that road serve the interests of British commerce with the important markets of Northern Persia, instead of, as at present, facilitating Russian competition in the central provinces. The advantages which Russia now enjoys of well-made carriage roads from Enzeli to Hamadan and to Tehran, Kum, and Sultanabad are perhaps not as obvious to-day as they ought to be; but motor traction may even in the near future replace the pack horse on Persian roads, and before long we may see motor lorries carrying merchandize in packages of any weight and dimensions from Enzeli to Kum and Sultanabad in a few days, whilst our commerce, restricted to such articles as can be conveniently made up in packages of less than 200 lb., perforce continues to crawl at heavy transport rates to these points on mule-back. We



count much on the benefit which will accrue to British commerce when we can carry our road from Kum to Ispahan, for that is a point at which it is worth while to transfer merchandize destined for Tehran from pack animals to waggons.

But we believe our enterprises ought to bear good results in Southern as well as in Northern Persia. Our river service to Ahwaz is surely, if slowly, developing commerce with the rich wheat lands of the Karun; and, should the further project of a road from Shushter to Burejird, Sultanabad, and Hamadan be realized, we shall have brought within the range of our commerce a wide region, producing pelts, wool, opium, gums, and carpets, which at present are exported chiefly to Russia.

We have, &c.

(Signed) LYNCH BROTLERS, Agents for the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company (Limited) and the Persian Transport Company (Limited).

[30873]

No. 164.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 11.)*

(No. 217.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 11, 1906.

PERSIAN telegraphs. Meshed-Seistan line.

I called on Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day, and he read me a Memorandum on the above subject which had been drawn up in his Department. According to it, all that has taken place was that the wire had been connected with the Russian instruments in order to insure correctness and rapidity of transmission, and that this was merely what had been already done in the case of the Tehran-Meshed line.

I explained to his Excellency that the Memorandum was in error as to the system adopted on the latter line, and that the matter was not a mere technical improvement. I told him that the batteries and wire of the Seistan line had been moved early in June from the Persian into the Russian office, that they had been replaced in the Persian office subsequently, and that now, it was said, under pressure of the Russian Minister at Tehran, orders had been given by the Persian authorities for their transfer back to the Russian office. I added that it was stated that the Russian Minister was exercising pressure with a view to complete control of the line. The above could not be considered mere technical improvements, and I begged him to give orders that matters should be replaced on the footing they were on before June.

M. Isvolsky expressed himself puzzled; he had no information beyond that contained in the Memorandum, and he had no desire to do anything by which the *status quo* might be altered, and that he must now himself undertake the study of the "dossier." I pressed him to send orders in the sense I had requested, but he repeated that he must look into the whole question.

I will reopen the subject when I see his Excellency in a day or two. He inquired whether the Persian and Russian offices were separate rooms, or whether only the batteries and apparatus of each were distinct. I said that my reports always spoke of the offices as if they were separate, but I could give him no positive information.

(Confidential.)

He said that it was possible his Department had taken a partial view of the matter in the Memorandum. Until quite recently he had been ignorant of the whole matter.

[30967]

No. 165.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 12.)*

(No. 239.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 12, 1906.

REFORM movement.

The Shah has signed the Regulations for the Assembly.

The exile of the persons mentioned in my telegram No. 235 is still insisted on by the people, and until it be granted the leaders refuse to leave the Legation. I have seen them, and they will not consent to any compromise.

[30968]

No. 166.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 12.)*

(No. 240.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 12, 1906.

MESHED-SEISTAN line.

Your telegram No. 133.

I am informed by His Majesty's Consul at Seistan that the Russians, who have hitherto used the same room in the Seistan office as the Persians and English, are now arranging for a separate room.

It is reported that the line will shortly be led through the Russian office, and the instruments installed there.

I have addressed a note to the Grand Vizier warning him of above.

[30473]

No. 167.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 290.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 12, 1906.

PERSIAN loan.

Mr. Grant Duff's telegram No. 237.

His Majesty's Government would be willing to join in a loan to the Persian Government of 400,000*l.* on conditions mentioned in above telegram.

I would propose to the Russian Government that, as security for our half of the loan, we should take, apart from the lien already held by us, an additional one upon the customs of the Gulf and southern ports, and that the Persian Government should also give us an undertaking not to grant any concessions to other Powers for the construction of roads, telegraphs, or railways in the district lying to the east of a line running to Bunder Abbas from Birjand.

To the westward of this line Russia would thus be free to make her own terms respecting her security.

If the question be raised by the Russian Government of themselves joining in the security of customs at Persian ports, we might give our consent to this being done at ports lying to the west of Bunder Abbas, and well within the mouth of the Persian Gulf, but such proposal must emanate from the Russian side, and before agreeing to it you should refer the matter for His Majesty's Government's consideration.

It is evident from this that what we desire is to render the joint loan something in the nature of a general settlement respecting Persia with the Imperial Government. Were this not the case, I am of opinion that His Majesty's Government would not be prepared to entertain the proposal of the joint loan.

[30967]

No. 168.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 138.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 12, 1906.

PERSIAN refugees at Legation.

To do more than has already been done would be, I think, to carry matters too far.

If your Russian colleague, whom you should consult, shares this view, you should inform the refugees at present at the Legation that we have secured for them the main objects for which they originally fled to the Legation, and that His Majesty's Government cannot, therefore, give them any further help.

[31097]

No. 169.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 13.)*

(No. 243.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 13, 1906.*

RUMOURED establishment of German Bank: My telegram No. 238.

I am informed by the Grand Vizier that permission to establish a German Bank in Tehran was given by his predecessor. His Highness stated that he had heard nothing of the matter lately.

[31098]

No. 170.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 13.)*

(No. 244.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 13, 1906.*

REFORM movement: Your telegram No. 138.

Before receiving your instructions I had already spoken to the refugees in the sense advised, but they positively refused to leave the Legation. Last night I saw the Russian Minister and asked his Excellency if he would be prepared to address to the Persian Government a joint note impressing upon them the danger of the situation and recommending that the demands of the people should be granted by the Shah. M. de Hartwig promised to refer the matter to St. Petersburg. May I act as suggested if the Russian Government approve? I agree with the view maintained by the people that, unless the officials mentioned in my telegram No. 235 are exiled, the National Assembly will be a farce.

The Grand Vizier, at an unsatisfactory interview which I had with him yesterday, practically told me that I must get rid of the refugees as best I could.

As the Minister is on the point of arriving, energetic measures seem specially desirable.

In spite of my warnings, no steps were taken by the Persian Government to prevent refugees returning to the Legation. Their presence is a serious nuisance, and it would appear to be the duty of the Persian Government to relieve us of it.

There is no prospect, as far as I can see, of my being able to induce these people to go, and to use force would be madness.

[31204]

No. 171.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 14.)*

(No. 245.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 14, 1906.*

MESHED-TEHRAN telegraph line: Your telegram No. 140.

In my telegram No. 226 I gave, on the authority of the Director of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, information as to our status on the Meshed-Tehran line. Information should be modified as follows:—

Both the Meshed and Tehran ends of the line terminate in British offices, which are situated in the Persian telegraph buildings, but are separate rooms. During certain fixed hours of the day connection is given to the Persian offices, and through the latter to the Russian operators, who in Tehran have a separate room and instruments of their own.

Maintenance of the line is under the British, and it is maintained at British expense with a small contribution from the Persian Government. There is a small establishment of ghohans for the work. No political significance attaches to the control of the Meshed-Tehran line, on which, moreover, we have no employés at the intermediate stations. On the Meshed-Seistan line the Russians have many employés

at intermediate stations, and great political and strategical importance attaches to its control owing to its geographical position.

The instruments have already been established in the Russian office at Meshed.

The Russian Legation has been pressing this matter for at least two years, so that it seems strange that the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs should know nothing about it.

[31205]

No. 172.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 14.)*

(No. 247.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 14, 1906.*

HIS Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed telegraphs as follows:—

"The instruments on the Meshed-Seistan telegraph line are so arranged as to form part of the line circuit.

"In this way messages passing through any station can be taken off without its being detected. This arrangement is against the interest of the Persian Government and has probably been made without their knowledge. We could object to it on the ground that the intermediate offices and instruments are Persian."

[31196]

No. 173.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 14.)*

(No. 220.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 14, 1906.*

ANGLO-RUSSIAN advance to Persian Government.

Your telegram No. 200 of the 12th instant.

Yesterday evening I communicated to M. Isvolsky the conditions on which His Majesty's Government are prepared to participate in a joint advance. My proposal seemed to meet with no objection in principle on his Excellency's part, but he said he could not give me a reply without reflection. He stated that according to his information a Delegate from the German bank would reach Tehran in about two weeks, and that he would probably learn our conditions from the Persian Government. His Excellency seemed afraid that the German Delegate would offer an unconditional advance, which the Persian Government would find attractive, and he appeared anxious that our joint advance should consequently be arranged with a minimum of delay. In these circumstances his Excellency appeared to doubt whether it would be prudent that our advance should be made subject to conditions, but he did not actually express this opinion. He inquired what guarantees would be procurable by the Russian Government, and I replied that he had the whole of Northern and Western Persia to secure them in. It seemed unnecessary, for the moment, to allude to joint guarantee of Customs in western ports of the Gulf. He asked if I would put our proposals into a Memorandum as soon as possible, and I said I would do so if he would regard it as very confidential.

The Emperor is on a yachting cruise till next Tuesday, and the matter will have to be submitted to His Majesty's consideration.

[31295]

No. 174.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 15.)*

(No. 222.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 15, 1906.*

TEHRAN-MESHED telegraph.

Mr. Grant Duff's telegram of yesterday in reply to your No. 140.

My case, as I presented it to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, is weakened by the corrected information. My arguments were based on information originally given in telegram from Mr. Grant Duff, No. 226. In these circumstances I may have to propose the third course suggested by the Indian Government. The Minister for Foreign Affairs will I hope see me on Monday next.



[31298]

No. 175.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 15.)*

(No. 249.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 15, 1906.*

FOLLOWING sent to Government of India:—

"In view of the reports of the disturbed state of the Turco-Persian frontier, which reach me from Tabreez, I doubt whether it is advisable at present for the Military Attaché to undertake a tour in those regions.

"A second Laristan incident is undesirable, and I would recommend postponement of the tour unless the military authorities have pressing need for intelligence from that part of the country.

"Arrangements for escorts will have to be made with the Persian Government if the tour is to be proceeded with."

[31525]

No. 176.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 112.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, September 16, 1906.*

PERSIAN refugees. Your telegram No. 244.

Russian Government have communicated to us through their Ambassador their views on joint action which you proposed.

They express gratification at our apparent wish to see joint action established in Persia, but they consider it doubtful whether the desired effect would in this particular instance be obtained by joint representations, and they think that a misconception might be placed on a joint audience of His Majesty the Shah, as implying that the two Powers were to interfere in the internal affairs of Persia, thus a weapon of argument, which could easily be directed against England and Russia, might be furnished to those elements which are hostile to the two Powers.

It is therefore suggested by Russian Government that, although you and your Russian colleague should act in concert as regards offering to the Persian Government friendly advice in order to secure a more quiet state in the country, you should each communicate such advice separately and not together.

[31312]

No. 177.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 17.)*

(No. 588.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, September 6, 1906.*

I INFORMED M. Isvolsky yesterday that His Majesty's Government had received some months ago an application from the Persian Government for a loan, but that the latter had been told that this request could not be entertained. In respect to the recent application for an advance and a loan, I told his Excellency that my Government were of opinion that, if some financial aid were really required, and if the Persian Government were likely to seek it elsewhere than in England and Russia, you were prepared to send instructions to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran to ascertain, in conjunction with the Russian Minister, what amount would suffice to meet urgent requirements, and also what means could be taken to assure that the advance was properly applied. In respect to a loan I said that you considered that, owing to the condition of the health of the Shah and the uncertainty of the immediate political future in Persia, it would be advisable to defer, if possible, embarking on so serious a matter as a loan. Moreover, as we understood that the Russian Government were in accord with us in supporting the succession of the Vullaho, it would be advisable to enable his Highness to start his reign with our common financial assistance should a loan be eventually necessary. I had prefaced my remarks, as I am sure you would have wished me to do, by expressing your appreciation of the loyal and friendly communication which his Excellency had made to me, as reported in my despatch No. 575 of the 1st instant.

M. Isvolsky took note of what I had said, and stated that he would telegraph to the Russian Minister to place himself in communication with Mr. Grant Duff. He added

that he presumed that the British and Russian Representatives at Tehran were not themselves to decide the amount and mode of making the advance, but merely to procure the necessary information for the subsequent decision of their respective Governments. I said that this, I was sure, was also your view.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[30983]

No. 178.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 13.)*

(No. 594.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, September 7, 1906.*

WITH reference to Mr. Spring-Rice's despatch No. 86 of the 27th January last, relative to the Russian commercial mission to Persia, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a Report drawn up by Mr. Cooke, British Commercial Agent in Russia, of the results achieved by the mission, as described by Prince Amatuni, who acted as its Chief.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 178.

*Report by Mr. Cooke, dated September 6, 1906.**Russian Trade Mission to Persia and Russo-Persian Trade Conditions.*

(No. 136.)

THE official "Commercial and Industrial Gazette" of St. Petersburg has published of late a series of articles on the subject of Russo-Persian trade conditions (mostly in the form of interviews with Prince N. I. Amatuni, head of an official Russian commercial mission to Persia). As natural to interviews, the articles being somewhat discursive and disconnected, I give below some of the essential points brought forth by the Prince (issues of the above-named paper of August 2 (15), 4 (17), 10 (23), 12 (25), 15 (28), and August 22 (September 4)), appending at the end, from other Russian official sources, the main totals and items of Russo-Persian trade.

*The Staff of the Mission.*

First, with regard to the mission itself. It consisted of its Chief, Prince N. I. Amatuni, thoroughly acquainted with Persian conditions "from many years of diligent and comprehensive study on the spot," and, in addition to his assistants, of five representatives of big Russian manufacturing firms, viz., one from each of the following: the Prokhoroff Textile Manufacturing Company, Messrs. Savva, Morozoff and Co. (textiles), Messrs. Lindvig, Rabenek and Co. (textiles), M. S. Kuznetsoff (the largest Russian chinaware, &c., manufacturers), and Messrs. Rieseltnikoff and Co. (textiles). The mission started early in 1904, visiting and minutely studying Isfah, Resht, Kazvin, Teheran, Ispahan, Shiraz, Bender Bushire, Ormus, Dissful, Bussora, Koot, Bagdad, &c.\* It returned to Russia in November 1904, after nine months' investigations of the Persian market. Prince Amatuni has now just returned from a second ten months' trade mission to the Persian Gulf; this further mission being equipped and dispatched in the autumn of last year "at the request of a group of Russian merchants." He has now been ordered by the Ministry of Trade and Industry to Moscow, Riga, Warsaw, Lodz, Odessa, Kharkoff, and Nijni Novgorod, to communicate the results of his expedition to local trade circles. The representatives of Russian manufacturing firms mentioned above as accompanying the expedition took with them to Persia samples of their respective manufactures.

\* Spelling according to the Russian wording of the same.

### *Some Practical Results.*

The expedition, the Prince says, obtained numerous orders for Russian goods. Later, he states, "I must also place in the Russian market the numerous commissions and orders I received in Persia, and I have had a quantity of letters and telegrams from Persia since. For instance, here is a telegram just received from a Bussorah merchant with regard to gold thread of the Moscow firm of Alexeeff, Shamshine, and Vishniakoff."\*

### *British Competition.*

With regard to British competition and Great Britain's attitude towards Persia, the Prince asserts that the English are interested in the Persian Gulf and southern provinces only so far as British communications with India are concerned. He returns to this statement continually, maintaining that it is altogether a mistake to imagine that England in every way endeavours to interfere with Russian trade in Persia. England's one object, he repeats, is to guarantee her communications with India, and she is now more concerned with Germany and the Bagdad Railway, and the aggressive policy that might ensue therefrom. The present is therefore, he maintains, the right moment to come to terms with England with regard to Persia. This he is "deeply convinced" is possible once England is assured that Russia has no aggressive ends in view with regard to India. Russia should do all possible to strengthen her commercial intercourse with Persia, "as here, rather than in Manchuria, we might sooner obtain access to an unfreezing port, and our commercial agents might be the vanguard to conquer the country for us."

Later, in reply to Russian criticisms of his assertions that British interference is not to be feared, he states that he spoke conditionally on Russian intercourse with the ports of the Persian Gulf being established on a proper footing.

### *Japanese Trade.*

In reply to criticisms in the press that he has ignored Japanese trade with Persia, he rejoins, from Russian official data recently published, that Japan is not even named among countries trading with Persia, Japanese goods entering Southern Persia in considerable quantities only through second hands, mostly Indian traders.

### *The Discount and Loan Bank.*

The trading functions of the Discount and Loan Bank, in his opinion, should be annulled. Russo-Persian trade would thereby largely benefit. The present Minister of Finance, he asserts, is entirely of opinion that Russo-Persian trade should be in the hands of private people, and not of Government institutions.

### *Proposals and Ideas for Extension of Russian Trade in Persia.*

Russia buys two-thirds of Persia's export in raw materials, and should, in return, find a market in Persia for Russian manufactures. Russian trade with South Persia should be exclusively on the barter system, on the condition that Persian goods be "protected" by the Government on import into Russia. The Prince lays down as an indisputable axiom that the manufacturer cannot, and should not, be at one and the same time manufacturer and seller, and attributes to the deviation from this rule the failure of the Russian manufacturers' depôts established of late years in Persia. The manufacturers, however, themselves entered the Persian market, he explains, to elude the proceedings of the intermediaries—Baku Armenians and Persians—through whose hands all Russian textile goods passed, these intermediaries being one of the chief causes of the discredit attached to Russian textiles in the Persian market. The intermediaries, on their part, justified their trade proceedings and manipulations by

\* In April of this year I forwarded to this same firm, at the request of a London firm for one of their Indian dealers, a large order for their Russian imitation gold thread. They returned the order, stating they have sold their whole production, intended for the Indian market, to a European firm.—HARRY COOKE.

the fact that the mass of their customers are not only poor, but also extremely unexact, cheapness being the essential consideration. The favourable climate demands from the Persian but the covering of his nakedness, and Eastern taste seeks but brilliant colours, without any pretensions to finish or art, and thus the best Russian textiles, being also the dearest, cannot obtain a wide sale in the Persian market.

The Prince considers, and he returns repeatedly and insistently to this idea, that the best and only means to better Russian trade intercourse with Persia would be the formation of a Society or Company to carry on barter trade with Persian merchants, providing the latter with various Russian manufactures in exchange for Persian raw materials. Such a Society or Company is now in process of formation, and only awaits Government support to assume its final shape and begin operations. Many big Moscow dealers will be on its staff. The support of the Government should consist of "certain privileges or facilities, if not equivalent to those granted to the Loan and Discount Bank, yet, in any case, such as would enable the new Company to carry on operations without competition on the part of the said Bank." Without such assistance, any efforts of the Government, whether in the form of shipping subsidies or otherwise, would be altogether unavailing. All varieties of Russian textiles should participate. Moscow, Lodz, Bielestok, Riga, St. Petersburg, and other manufacturing centres should be represented in the general undertaking, otherwise there can be no hopes of success. It should be prepared to expect during its first years of activity no dividend whatever on its export trade. Only by patient working for results, even with preliminary losses, can success be attained. As regards its import trade (from Persia), the most serious difficulty would be to find competent and expert Russian agents, acquainted with the language and trade customs of Persia. The Company proposes to in time extend its operations to Abyssinia and to the Far East. It also has in view the dispatch of a commercial mission to Abyssinia.

### *British versus Russian activity.*

Incidentally the Prince refers to Russian negligence, apathy, and lack of perseverance as regards trade openings in Persia, in contrast to the energetic and carefully planned activity of the English.

### *Russian Consuls in Persia.*

He repeatedly insists on the insufficiency of Russian Consular assistance in Persia, the Consuls being too occupied with political affairs. He adds that the British commercial mission of Colonel Newcomen in 1905 advised the British Government to appoint a commercial agent at Tehran, with control over the commercial affairs of the consulates.\*

### *The Moscow Bourse Committee's Co-operation.*

In connection with the above, the official "Commercial and Industrial Gazette" of St. Petersburg of the 10th (23rd) August states that the Moscow Bourse Committee has informed the Ministry of Trade and Industry that it is prepared to meet the proposals of the Ministry with reference to the establishment of closer trade relations with Persia. The same paper of the 12th (25th) August states that the Moscow Bourse Committee meets with sympathy the proposal of Prince Amatuni that a commercial museum should be founded at Moscow in the interests of Russo-Persian trade development. The Bourse Committee will give material assistance towards the establishment of such a museum.

The above, in summarized form, are the essential portions of the series of articles that have appeared to date on Prince Amatuni's commercial mission to Persia.

\* The "Commercial and Industrial Gazette" of yesterday's date, received to-day (24th August (6th September)), quotes the opinion of the Baku paper "Caspian" that it is a mistake to attribute the weak development of Russian trade in Persia to British competition. The real cause, it maintains, is the lack of preparation of Russian Consuls for commercial work, and the subordination of commercial affairs to political.



*Russo-Persian Trade Totals.*

Below, in this connection, are appended, derived from other sources (the official "Viestnik Finansov" of St. Petersburg of the 6th (19th) August, 1906), the main totals and items of Russo-Persian trade:—

Year.*	Import to Persia.		Export from Persia.	
	Total.	Including from Russia.	Total.	Including to Russia.
	Krans.	Krans.	Krans.	Krans.
1901-1902 .. ..	298,577,000	114,787,000	150,598,000	88,406,000
1902-1903 .. ..	273,385,000	119,714,000	186,334,000	123,443,000
1903-1904 .. ..	392,632,000	184,732,000	254,775,000	155,512,000
1904-1905 .. ..	319,315,000	169,379,000	247,961,000	147,564,000
Average .. ..	328,877,000	147,565,000	202,417,000	128,731,000

Import to Persia from Russia.		Export from Persia to Russia.	
1902-1904.	1904-1905.	1903-1904.	1904-1905.
Krans.	Krans.	Krans.	Krans.
184,732,000	169,379,000	155,512,000	126,467,000

Import to Persia from the British Empire.		Export from Persia to the British Empire.	
1903-1904.	1904-1905.	1903-1904.	1904-1905.
Krans.	Krans.	Krans.	Krans.
128,401,000	119,696,000	21,113,000	25,197,000

*Import to Persia from Russia.*

Russia supplies the Persian market chiefly with sugar and cotton textiles, which together form about two-thirds of Russia's export to Persia. As regards refined sugar Russia supplied 54,424,000 kranas of the total Persian import of 65,339,000 kranas in 1904-1905. Of the total Persian import of sand sugar (10,958,000 kranas), Russia supplied 6,772,000 kranas, Austria coming next.

In the supply to Persia of cotton textiles the British Empire precedes Russia, the figures for 1904-1905 being:—

	Krans.
From the British Empire .. ..	68,000,000
From Russia .. ..	52,000,000

In the supply of naphtha products Russia has hardly any competitor, though the Persian demand is comparatively small, the import from Russia being 9,944,000 kranas.

*Export to Russia from Persia.*

Persia exported to Russia in 1904-1905 chiefly fish, fresh and salted (35,917,000 kranas); fresh and dried fruits (32,862,000 kranas); rice (13,457,000 kranas); opium (13,510,000 kranas); wool and woollen carpets, &c. The export of opium was extraordinary, and probably accidental or chance, the export to Russia in the previous year being only 712,000 kranas.

(Signed) HENRY COOKE,  
British Commercial Agent in Russia.

Moscow, September 6, 1906.

\* The Persian year counting from 21st March to 20th March (inclusive).

*Supplementary Note by Mr. Cooke.*

(No. 137.)

IN connection with my note No. 136 of this day's date (6th September), on the subject of Russo-Persian trade and the late mission of Prince Amatuni to Persia, and to the recommendation (on page 2) of the Prince that Persian goods, on import to Russia, should be "protected" (i.e., assisted) by the Russian Government, it is of interest to note in the official "Commercial and Industrial Gazette" of St. Petersburg of yesterday's date, since received here, a brief agency telegram: "The (Russian) Government proposes to abolish the duty on fish imported from Persia." Fish, fresh and dried, as mentioned on the last page of the above-mentioned note No. 136, is the largest item of Persian export to Russia (? excluding cotton).

(Signed) HENRY COOKE,  
British Commercial Agent in Russia.

Moscow, September 6, 1906.

[31319]

No. 179.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 17.)

(No. 600. Very Confidential.)

St. Petersburg, September 8, 1906.

Sir,

M. ISVOLSKY called upon me this evening, and said that he wished to inform me in strict confidence that he had received information from a source on which he could rely that negotiations were proceeding between the Persian Government and a German bank for an immediate advance, without any guarantees, of 5,000,000 tomans (about 800,000L.), and also for a subsequent loan up to 15,000,000 tomans (about 2,500,000L.). The loan would be secured on some guarantees and concessions, and among the latter would figure the establishment of a German bank in Persia. The name of the German bank which was conducting the negotiations was not given to him, but he presumed that it must be the Deutsche Bank. His Excellency said that possibly the figures which had been furnished to him were exaggerated, as he could not imagine that any bank would make so large an advance without any security, especially in the present condition of Persia. But he had no doubts as to the main facts of what had been reported to him, and it seemed to him of urgency that immediate steps should be adopted to block the scheme by the British and Russian Government making a joint advance.

I thanked his Excellency cordially for having been so frank with me, and I quite agreed with him that no time should be lost in preventing the Persian Government from pursuing the negotiations with the German Bank. I would at once telegraph to you and beg for an early reply.

M. Isvolsky said that he understood that a repayment was due to the Imperial Bank of Persia at the end of this month, and there were also sums due immediately to the Russian Bank. He thought it would be desirable to endeavour to arrange for the postponement of these repayments, and to limit our joint advance to the strict requirements of the situation. I said that doubtless this matter could be arranged, and that it would be necessary to see that the proceeds of the advance were properly applied.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[31322]

No. 180.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 17.)

(No. 603.)

St. Petersburg, September 8, 1906.

Sir,

AFTER that we had terminated our conversation in regard to the negotiations respecting a German advance and loan to the Persian Government, M. Isvolsky said that there was another matter on which he desired to speak to me. He then read to me a telegram which he had received from Count Benckendorff, reporting a conversation which his Excellency had had with Sir C. Hardinge, and in which the latter had expressed some surprise that the Russian Government had sanctioned the transfer to Russian authorities of the control over the Meshed-Seistan telegraph line, as this manifestly was a disturbance of the *status quo*, and would call for a demand by His

Majesty's Government for a counter-concession. (I may not have quite accurately recorded the exact words of the telegram, as it was read to me a little hurriedly.)

M. Isvolsky added that Count Benckendorff had been told that I should be instructed to speak to him on the subject. His Excellency said that he wished to anticipate what I might have to say to him by assuring me that the telegram from Count Benckendorff was the first intimation he had received of any project concerning the Meshed-Seistan line. He had inquired in his Department what had occurred, and he was informed that M. Hartwig had recently sent a despatch concerning the substitution of some Persian telegraphic apparatus by a more improved Russian apparatus; but that as the question was merely a minor technical matter, it had not been considered necessary to submit it to him. His Excellency said that he had not fully understood the technical details, which were accompanied with drawings, but that he had requested further information to be supplied to him, and he had also given instructions that all matters, however trivial, concerning Persia should be submitted to him. He asked what information and instructions I had received.

I told his Excellency that Sir C. Hardinge, in a letter which I had received this morning, had informed me of the conversation which he had held with Count Benckendorff, and that I was expecting a telegram, on which I intended to speak to him. I did not mention the instructions which had been conveyed in your telegram No. 271, as I was not sure that they constituted final instructions, and, moreover, the explanations offered by M. Isvolsky somewhat altered the case.

I further told M. Isvolsky that, according to my information, and which was the same as that received by my Government, a concession had been given, or was about to be given, to the Russian authorities to take over the whole control of the Meshed-Seistan telegraph line, and that this had naturally caused surprise, as it would constitute a disturbance of the *status quo*.

His Excellency replied that he was the last man to entertain any idea of making a change in the *status quo*, and that he had never heard of any project such as I had mentioned.

I told him that I would telegraph to you the explanations which he had been good enough to give me, and that when I had received a reply I would come and see him on the subject. M. Isvolsky begged that I would do so, and in the meantime he would collect what information he could on the subject, and we could then discuss the question.

I am convinced that M. Isvolsky was speaking in all sincerity; and as he asserts that he desires to do nothing which would affect the *status quo* in Persia, I would suggest that I should request him to send instructions to the Russian Minister at Tehran to abandon any idea, should he have conceived one, of obtaining control over the Meshed-Seistan telegraph.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[31326]

No. 181.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 17.)

(No. 607.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, September 11, 1906.

I CALLED on M. Isvolsky this afternoon, and said that I should be glad to renew my conversation with him in regard to the Meshed-Seistan line.

His Excellency informed me that since our last conversation he had received a Memorandum drawn up in his Department on the subject, and he would like to read it to me.

The Memorandum, which was not a lengthy document, gave a sketch of the history of the line, and stated that recently it had been found that much delay and inconvenience were caused by the wire being attached to the Persian instruments, and that, at the request of the Persian authorities, it had been arranged that the wire should be placed on to the Russian instruments, as was the case with the Tehran-Meshed line, where the wire was on British instruments. The Memorandum further stated that there were a few Russian technical officials on the line to see that it was kept in proper working order. His Excellency said that I would see that no change had been made beyond a mere technical detail for the purpose of improving the service, and

that the Department had considered the matter to be of so little moment that the question had not even been submitted to him.

I asked his Excellency to permit me to make a few observations on the subject, as I thought I could show him that the matter was not so innocent and simple as might appear on the surface. In the first place, I thought that the Memorandum was in error in supposing that the Tehran-Meshed line was under the control of the British Telegraph Office. I remember that when I was at Tehran, the Tehran-Meshed line worked most unsatisfactorily; telegraph posts were continually being knocked down and wires broken, and as there was considerable traffic over it, owing to the Afghan Delimitation Commission, the delays and interruptions were most inconvenient. At my request the Persian Government permitted the officials of the Indian Telegraph Office at Tehran to keep the line in good order, and this we did at our expense. I believed that now the custom was to allot a subsidy of some 40,000 fr. to the Persian Government to keep the line in order, and all that we did was to request the Persian authorities to send orders to the Persian officials at the intermediate stations to repair damages. We ourselves had no officers on the line, and I doubted if the terminal lines were in our offices at Tehran; I was almost sure they were not.

In regard to the Meshed-Seistan line, I would observe that early in June the battery and wire of the line were moved from the Persian into the Russian office, but that by the end of June they were retransferred to the Persian office. Now we had received information that, under pressure from the Russian Minister, the battery and wire were again to be brought into the Russian office, and, moreover, that M. Hartwig was requesting that the complete control of the line was to be handed over to the Russian authorities.

His Excellency interrupted me by saying that there was not a word in the Memorandum as to any intention of obtaining control over the line, and he did not really see what importance could be attached to placing the terminal line on to the Russian instrument.

I replied that if no control had been requested, and would not be requested, I would not press that point; but I pointed out that, if the terminal lines were in the Russian office, complete control would be held over all telegraphic communication between Tehran and the eastern portion of Persia, and this might prove a serious matter. What I wished to ask his Excellency was that matters should be replaced on the footing on which they were before June, certainly in regard to the location of the terminal lines. I did not want for the moment to discuss the presence of Russian telegraph officials on the line, that was a point to which I might have to refer later, but I begged his Excellency to send orders at present to the Russian Legation in Tehran to allow the terminal lines to remain in the Persian office.

M. Isvolsky confessed that he was really puzzled. He would tell me frankly that he had no other information on the subject than that which was contained in the Memorandum which he had read to me, and beyond that paper he had not seen a document on the subject. He saw that it would be necessary for him to read the whole "dossier." He noticed that I always spoke of "offices," and he would like to know whether the Persian and Russian offices at Meshed were separate, or whether, as he understood, the Russian and Persian batteries and instruments were in the same room. I told him that I had no information as to these points, but as all the reports which I had received spoke of offices, I imagined that they must be separate rooms. This, however, was not of great moment. The question, to my mind, was that the Seistan telegraph line was to be under the control of Russian telegraphists, and that I earnestly trusted that he would send instructions which could enable matters to remain in the same condition as they were before June last. We could discuss the general question of the Seistan line later. His Excellency said that he must first study all the papers, as my information differed from that which was contained in the Memorandum. He added that perhaps his Department had not given both sides of the question, and he must look into the matter very carefully. He repeated his assurance that he had no desire to alter in any way the *status quo*, and that he wished to abide by the understanding between the two Governments that neither country should take any steps pending a general agreement on Persia.

I intend to consign in an *aide-memoire* the substance of what I have mentioned to his Excellency, and will send it to him to-morrow. I did not allude to any compromise in the shape of giving the Russian authorities control over the Tehran-Meshed line in exchange for our exercising a similar control over the Meshed-Seistan line, as I have some hopes, if matters have not gone too far at Meshed, to induce M. Isvolsky to



dispatch the instructions which I have suggested. If I find that I cannot obtain this, I will then discuss with his Excellency the alternative proposed by the Government of India.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[31330]

No. 182.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 17.)*

(No. 611.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, September 12, 1906.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 607 of yesterday's date, I have the honour to transmit copy of an *aide-mémoire* which I sent privately to M. Isvolsky this morning, recapitulating the observations which I made to his Excellency during our conversation in regard to the Meshed-Seistan telegraph line.

I have asked M. Isvolsky to be good enough to give me a reply as soon as he conveniently can.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 182.

*Aide-mémoire communicated to the Russian Government, September 12, 1906.*

DANS les premiers jours de Juin (N.S.) l'appareil et le fil du télégraphe Meshed-Seistan furent transférés du Bureau Persan dans le Bureau Russe; mais ils ont été remis dans le Bureau Persan quelques jours plus tard. D'après des renseignements dernièrement reçus il paraît que le Gouvernement Persan, sur la demande, dit-on, de la Légation Russe à Téhéran, a donné des ordres pour transférer de nouveau l'appareil et le fil dans le Bureau Russe. Si cette mesure est réalisée, toute la communication télégraphique entre Téhéran et les provinces orientales de la Perse sera sous le contrôle des employés du télégraphe Russe. Du reste, on prétend que la Légation Russe désire obtenir du Gouvernement Persan le contrôle complet de la ligne télégraphique de Meshed à Seistan. Sans vouloir entrer pour le moment dans la question des employés Russes stationnés sur la ligne télégraphique susmentionnée, il est à désirer que le *statu quo* tel qu'il a existé avant le mois de Juin dernier (N.S.) ne soit changé, et le Gouvernement Britannique espère que le Gouvernement Russe voudrait envoyer des instructions pour que le transfert de l'appareil et du fil télégraphique dans le Bureau Russe n'ait pas lieu et que toutes les choses restent comme elles étaient avant le mois de Juin (N.S.).

On peut remarquer d'ailleurs que sur la ligne Téhéran-Meshed il n'y a que des employés Persans, et que toute intervention Anglaise est limitée à prier, en cas de nécessité, le Ministère Persan des Postes et Télégraphes d'expédier des ordres à leurs employés de remédier aux défectuosités qui pourraient se présenter sur la ligne télégraphique. Un subside est alloué au Gouvernement Persan pour faire face aux réparations nécessaires.

*Saint-Petersbourg, le 30 Août (12 Septembre), 1906.*

[31337]

No. 183.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 17.)*

(No. 618.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, September 13, 1906.*

I CALLED on M. Isvolsky this afternoon and informed him that His Majesty's Government were ready to join in an advance to the Persian Government, and that the conditions as to the mode of disposing of the money and of securing its proper application, which were proposed by the British and Russian Representatives in Tehran, met with your approval. In view, however, of the unstable situation in Persia, my Government considered that it would be necessary to secure some guarantees for their moiety of the advance. With this object we proposed that we should have a lien in addition to

that which we already held upon the customs of the southern and Gulf ports. Moreover, we considered it necessary that we should obtain an undertaking from the Persian Government that they would not grant to other Powers Concessions for railways, roads, or telegraphs in the district which lay to the east of a line drawn from Birjand to Bunder Abbas. I observed to his Excellency that, though of course I knew that the Russian Government had no designs in those quarters, still it was quite possible that other Powers, desirous of affording financial assistance to Persia, or of establishing an industrial or commercial footing in that country, might seek to develop the resources of provinces where it would be inconvenient for us to see foreign enterprise, and consequently foreign influence, introduced.

M. Isvolsky said that he understood this, and inquired what guarantees the Russian Government could demand for their share of the advance. I told him that west of the line which I had mentioned there was ample scope for securing the necessary guarantees, and it seemed to me that the Russian Government would have no difficulty in safeguarding their interests in the northern and western portions of Persia.

His Excellency said that he was unable to give me a reply offhand, and that he would be very grateful if I would give him a "notice" containing our propositions, and that he trusted I would let him have it as soon as possible. I told him that I would have no objection to doing this, but "à titre très confidentiel," and that, as I had to dispatch my bag this evening, I could only let him have the "notice" to-morrow at the earliest.

His Excellency said that he mentioned his desire to have the "notice" as soon as possible, as he had received information that a delegate from the German bank was to arrive at Tehran at the end of this month—that is, in less than three weeks. He was afraid that if either of us, or both of us, imposed conditions of the nature which I had described, the Persian Government would immediately acquaint the German delegate with their character, and that the latter would, as he had previously told me, probably express his readiness to make the necessary advances without any conditions at all. In that case the Persian Government would feel no hesitation as to which offer they should accept.

M. Isvolsky did not appear to be surprised at the conditions which I had communicated to him, nor did he seem disposed to offer any objections to them. But I think that he would prefer that the advances should be made without guarantees, so as to place our offers in as favourable a light as possible to the Persian Government, and preclude them from listening to the temptations which may be held out to them by German financiers.

I must apologize if this despatch seems to be hasty in its composition, but I have only a very short time at my disposal before the bag closes.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[31532]

No. 184.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 17.)*

(No. 224.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 17, 1906.*

ADVANCE to Persian Government.

My telegram No. 220 of the 14th instant.

In the opinion of M. Isvolsky, it would be more prudent not to connect a matter which would practically be the delimitation of spheres of influence in Persia with an advance, which is a comparatively trifling affair. He considers that, when we take up the whole question of a serious loan in common, a matter which he hopes to speak to me about in a day or two, the moment will have arrived for the discussion and arrangement of the large question of spheres of influence. In regard to the advance, he is of opinion that it would be wiser, on account of the considerations set forth in my telegram above referred to, to confine ourselves to—

(a.) The postponement of the repayment of loans made by the Russian Bank at Tehran and the Imperial Bank of Persia.

(b.) That we should be satisfied with a lien on the customs of the ports in the Persian Gulf and in Southern Persia.

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2 O

(c.) That England should make her moiety of the advance immediately, while that furnished by Russia would be supplied in the course of five or six months. It would be inconvenient for the Russian Government to be obliged to furnish their share of the loan at once, owing to the necessity of obtaining legislative sanction and other considerations.

[31528]

No. 185.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 17.)*

(No. 226.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 17, 1906.

I HAVE been requested by Minister for Foreign Affairs to postpone discussion of question of Meshed-Seistan line till he has received additional information, expected immediately from Tehran.

Since he desires apparently to settle without delay delimitation of respective spheres of influence in Persia, this question could easily be arranged, simultaneously with larger question, on basis of third alternative proposed by Indian Government.

[31627]

No. 186.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 18.)*

(No. 250.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 18, 1906.

REFORM movement.

People of Tabreez threaten to take sanctuary in the British Consulate General there, and Mollahs and others have already resorted to the Resht Consulate.

I have informed the Persian Government of this.

[31629]

No. 187.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 18.)*

(No. 251.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 18, 1906.

KARUN irrigation scheme.

I have received a telegram from His Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah, who states that the Sheikh has asked him whether it is true that negotiations are proceeding between a German firm and the Grand Vizier for the execution of the irrigation scheme devised by M. van Roggen, the Germans advancing a sum of 3,000,000 tomans at 4 per cent., the advance to be repaid from the profits of the undertaking.

I have sent the following reply:—

"The engineer you mention and the Netherlands Minister are trying to carry out the irrigation scheme by floating an International Company with a capital of 30,000,000 fr. and Dutch directorate.

"A copy of a despatch to the Foreign Office, giving details of the scheme, and sent by the last messenger, has been forwarded to you.

"Nothing is known to me as to German participation in the scheme, but the Persian Government are strongly suspected of trying to raise a loan from Germany. Please make further inquiries locally and let me know result."

[31738]

No. 188.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 19.)*

(No. 229.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 19, 1906.

ANGLO-RUSSIAN joint advance to Persia.

With reference to my telegram No. 224 of the 17th instant, I was informed by M. Isvolsky this afternoon that the return of the Emperor from his yachting cruise had been postponed for a few days, and that he has, for this reason, been unable to consult

His Majesty in regard to the matter of spheres of influence and the other questions mentioned. He hopes to see the Emperor shortly, but in the meanwhile he still trusts that we shall be content to limit the security for our share of the advance to a lien on the revenues of the customs of the ports of Southern Persia, and that the question of spheres of influence will be left over for discussion in connection with the proposal for a joint Anglo-Russian loan. M. Isvolsky also expressed the hope that the suggestion to postpone the repayment by the Persian Government of advances already made by the Imperial Bank will be agreed to by the latter.

He repeated his opinion that the best method of solving the question of Persia between England and Russia was by means of spheres of influence.

[31739]

No. 189.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 19.)*

(No. 230.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 19, 1906.

MY telegram No. 120.

Meshed-Seistan line.

I have received from M. Isvolsky a Memorandum in explanation and justification of steps taken by Russian authorities. I informed him that I was authorized to suggest, as a compromise, that we should take the Meshed-Seistan line, leaving the Tehran-Meshed line to Russia in exchange. M. Isvolsky, who said he would consider this suggestion, inquired whether it could not be included in a discussion on the larger question. I stated in reply that this was, I thought, possible, and perhaps preferable.

The report as to the attempt of the Russian Legation to secure complete control over the Seistan-Meshed line was stated in the Memorandum to be quite unfounded.

[31532]

No. 190.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 324.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 19, 1906.

PERSIA.

No doubt the Russian Government will have their own view as to what in the west and north should constitute for them a sphere of interest corresponding to ours in the east and south, the middle portion being left equally open to general enterprise.

We have no objection to the first and second conditions mentioned in your telegram No. 224 of the 17th instant, but we think each Government should share in the first moiety of the advance, also we might obtain from the Russians, as the starting point of common action, recognition of the proposed line from Bander Abbas to Birjand.

[29702]

No. 191.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, September 19, 1906.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 22nd ultimo, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you herewith, for the information of Mr. Secretary Morley, copy of a despatch, with inclosures, from His Majesty's Representative at Tehran, on the subject of the expulsion of Messrs Ziegler's agent from Yezd and the security of Europeans in that town.\*

I am to state that, under the circumstances set forth in Mr. Grant Duff's despatch, Sir E. Grey is of opinion that no action is necessary for the present in regard to the establishment of a Consular guard at Yezd.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GORST.



[31781]

No. 192.

*Imperial Bank of Persia to Foreign Office.—(Received September 20.)*

Sir, 25, Abchurch Lane, London, September 19, 1906.  
 WITH reference to my letter of the 10th March last, I have the honour to transmit, for your information, copies of further correspondence which has passed between the Persian Legation and the Bank in reference to the overdraft of the Persian Government, for which the Bank holds a promissory note of His Imperial Majesty the Shah due to-morrow.

I have, &c.  
 (Signed) G. NEWELL, Manager.

Inclosure 1 in No. 192.

*Mirza Mehdi Khan to Sir L. Griffin.*

Dear Sir Lepel Griffin, Persian Legation, September 12, 1906.  
 I HEREWITH inclose the translation of his Highness the Sadre Azam's telegram, and I hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you soon that yourself and the Directors will accede to the request which the Sadre Azam has made. And as soon as you authorize me to telegraph this to his Highness I will do so, and will at the same time mention fully about what you told me on Monday. I know that if it was in any way within the power of his Highness to pay this amount he would not for a moment think of asking the Imperial Bank to wait. For reasons, which I mentioned to you, and in face of the difficulties existing, I personally venture to say that the Imperial Bank, as the State Bank of Persia, should, as they have always done, do their utmost to assist the Government, especially at the present moment.

I shall personally be grateful too if yourself and the Directors would arrange this matter as requested by the Sadre Azam.

I remain, &c.  
 (Signed) MEHDI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 192.

*Sadre Azam to Persian Legation, London.*

(Translation.)  
 (Telegraphic.)

[Undated.]

YOU are fully aware of the discussion and the arrangement in regard to the overdraft account of the Imperial Bank of Persia. I am doing my utmost to procure a sum of money for the payment of this account as soon as possible, so that the Chairman and the Directors of the Imperial Bank may be at rest in regard to this matter. But it is too plain, and the Chairman and the Directors will realize this, that during the short period that all the affairs have been intrusted to me and with the present state of the Treasury, in regard to which there are many difficulties, I have not in any way been able to procure hastily money for the payment of this loan. I want you therefore to see the Chairman, and to tell him on my behalf that, in view of the good intentions and the consideration which the Imperial Bank have always shown in facilitating the affairs of the Imperial Treasury on this occasion, and now that I am taking urgent steps to reform the finances and to pay the debts of the Imperial Government and have started in this work, I request the Imperial Bank to co-operate with me and to assist me. This will give His Imperial Majesty gratification, and I shall be grateful for it. I should like the Chairman and the Directors to give me a little time—about a year—so that I may be able to procure the amount of the overdraft account and pay it to the Imperial Bank.

Inclosure 3 in No. 192.

*Sir L. Griffin to Mirza Mehdi Khan.*

Buzshalls, Lindfield, Hayward's Heath,  
 September 13, 1906.

My dear Mirza Mehdi Khan,

I THANK you for your letter inclosing the copy of the Prime Minister's telegram, and I placed them before my colleagues yesterday.

They were of the same opinion that I expressed to you verbally on Monday, that while the Imperial Bank was desirous of meeting the wishes of the Prime Minister in every way, yet that their first duty was to their shareholders, and that the overdraft of the Persian Government must be paid in order to legalize our position. We had already gone beyond the legal limit of our Concession, with the object of assisting the Persian Government at a critical time, His Imperial Majesty personally guaranteeing the repayment of the advance at a fixed date now fast approaching.

The Directors are sure that His Majesty would insist upon his promise to the Bank being duly honoured, and they have no doubt that this can easily be done by a deposit of gold from the Private Treasury, which the Bank are quite ready to hold for a year, and to return to the Treasury when the overdraft is liquidated in any more convenient or agreeable manner. This can cause no difficulty. In any case, the Bank confidently rely upon the due fulfilment of His Majesty's engagement.

Believe me, &c.  
 (Signed) LEPEL GRIFFIN.

Inclosure 4 in No. 192.

*Mirza Mehdi Khan to Sir L. Griffin.*

(Private.)

Dear Sir Lepel Griffin,

Persian Legation, September 14, 1906.

I HAVE just received your letter of yesterday's date, and I learn with regret the decision of the Board. I told you on Monday what I thought as regards the gold to which you referred, and do you for one moment think that if it was at all possible for His Imperial Majesty and the Government to pay this amount in some form or another they would defer it?

I will certainly telegraph, if you wish, the purport of your letter. But my personal and sincere opinion, not only as acting on behalf of the Government, but having the interests of the Imperial Bank at heart, is that as it is impossible for the Government to do anything at the present moment, and in view of the tone of the message the Sadre Azam has addressed to you through me, it would be much more conciliatory, and more in accordance with the traditions of the Imperial Bank in their relations with the Imperial Government that, even if you do not wish to give the time required, you would give about six months or so (and the only thing that can be done at the present moment is to give time). You can then mention, if you like, the question of gold at the same time, saying that you have received reports to that effect, and, under these circumstances, in your opinion the Government should have made a deposit at once, but in order to meet the wishes of the Sadre Azam you will wait a little longer (six months, or any time you wish to propose), and that you expect them to make preparations for making a deposit by the end of that time. This, as I venture to think you will agree with me, will have double effect: first, it will prove the conciliatory spirit of the Imperial Bank, and their desire to assist the Government in every way, and to accede to the first request the Sadre Azam has made; second, it will enable you to ascertain whether the report you have received in regard to gold is correct without in any way offending the Sadre Azam. I hope you will realize the sincerity of the suggestion I venture to make as a well-wisher of the Bank, and will authorize me to telegraph to this effect. Should you wish to see me on the subject to-morrow I will be pleased to call on you any time convenient to you.

Yours sincerely,  
 (Signed) MEHDI.

Inclosure 5 in No. 192.

*Sir L. Griffin to Mirza Mehdi Khan.**Buzshalls, Lindfield, Hayward's Heath,  
September 15, 1906.*

My dear Mirza Mehdi Khan,

I SHALL not be returning to London till Monday, when I shall be pleased to see you if you desire it. But I have nothing more to say on the question of the overdraft. You seem to forget that it is the Imperial Bank that should complain of the want of consideration of the Persian Government, and it is quite wrong to accuse the Bank of want of consideration.

In order to oblige and assist the Government we went beyond and outside our legal obligation; and when we ask the Persian Government, as they solemnly promised, to place us again in our legal position towards the shareholders, they ask for delay after delay.

We cannot accept this situation, and I am quite certain that his Excellency the Prime Minister can meet this small obligation of His Majesty without any difficulty. Anyhow, the Bank Directors cannot consent to delay, as it would be wrong to do so, looking to the shareholders' interests and rights.

Yours, &c.  
(Signed) LEPEL GRIFFIN.

Inclosure 6 in No. 192.

*Mirza Mehdi Khan to Sir L. Griffin.*

Dear Sir Lepel Griffin,

*Persian Legation, September 16, 1906.*

I HAVE received your letter. Under these circumstances I will see you after I have heard from the Sadre Azam with whom I have communicated. I am sorry to see from your letter that you have misconstrued my remarks, as I have never accused the Imperial Bank of want of consideration. What I said and repeat is that the Imperial Bank as the State Bank of Persia should show their traditional conciliatory spirit, and not press for payment at a time when the sole remedy is to give time.

Yours, &c.  
(Signed) MEHDI.

[31842]

No. 193.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey. — (Received September 20.)*

(No. 252.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 20, 1906.*

REFORM movement.

Mollahs to the number of twenty have taken refuge in the Tabreez Consulate-General out of sympathy for the reform movement.

I am informed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that, at a Council of Ministers held last Monday, the Shah openly expressed his approval of the National Assembly. This is looked upon as a blow to the reactionary party, but the late Grand Vizier is still encamped about 15 miles from Tehran and the Shah keeps up constant communication with him.

The refugees still remaining in the Legation have been corralled in an outhouse, so that the garden is clear of them.

In the Consulate at Resht there are now 200 refugees.

[31824]

No. 194.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 118.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, September 20, 1906.*

PERSIAN refugees.

Inquiry was made yesterday by Persian Chargé d'Affaires, on instructions from his Government, as to why refugees had been allowed by you to remain at His Majesty's

Legation, and why their requests, which were unreasonable, had been communicated to the Persian Government by you officially.

I replied that a week ago the refugees had been informed by you that nothing more could be done for them; that the Minister for Foreign Affairs at Tehran was perfectly aware that you could not refuse asylum to them in the Legation or forcibly expel them, and that Shah's Government should try to save us the inconvenience caused by such proceedings by endeavouring to settle their own affairs.

[31927]

No. 195.

*India Office to Foreign Office. — (Received September 21.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 19th September, relative to the Meshed-Seistan telegraph line.

*India Office, September 20, 1906.*

Inclosure in No. 195.

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*September 19, 1906.*

MESHED-SEISTAN telegraph.

With reference to your telegram dated the 12th instant, we would invite reference to telegrams addressed to Tehran, and no doubt repeated to you, by Kennion, and by Dankes. Following is position at present moment: Russians are able to cut off or tap messages on Seistan line when they choose, Meshed termination of that line having been brought into Russian office. They have thus secured position similar to ours on Tehran line. It is said that line will shortly be taken through Russian office in Seistan, and arrangements are being made by Russians, who hitherto have used same room in telegraph office as ourselves and Persians, for a separate room to themselves. On the 24th July reserve of ten Russian telegraphists and only four British signallers on Meshed-Seistan line was reported by Kennion in a letter to Mr. Grant Duff of that date, which by now has probably been communicated to you. British signallers were distributed as follows: Nasratabad 1, Birjand 2, Turbat 1. Of the Russian telegraphists two that were posted to Nasratabad, Khaf, Meshed, and Turbat, one each to Birjand and Shuster.

(Repeated to Tehran.)

[31943]

No. 196.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey. — (Received September 21.)*

(No. 234.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 21, 1906.*

PERSIAN advance.

With reference to your telegram No. 321 of the 19th instant, I was informed to-day by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Russian Government agree that the first moiety of the advance should be made jointly by England and Russia. He further stated that the idea of His Majesty's Government that the spheres of influence should leave the greater part of Persia open to general enterprise coincided with his own. I will speak with him again on this point, and endeavour to gain more precise information as to what M. Isvolsky considers should be the Russian sphere of influence.

I did not press the point that we should obtain from Russia the recognition of our line as the starting point for common action, since he is so anxious not to associate the question of spheres with that of the first advance. I will bring this point up later, and I trust that you approve my action. M. Isvolsky is very anxious that there should be as little delay as possible in making the advance, as he is informed that the need of money is very pressing now in Persia.

He has been officially informed by the German Chargé d'Affaires that the Persians have given a Concession for the establishment of a bank to Germany.



[31944]

No. 197.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 21.)*

(No. 235.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 21, 1906.*

FINANCIAL situation of Persia.

I was informed to-day by M. Isvolsky that M. Naus had been invited by the Minister of Finance to visit St. Petersburg with a view to discussing the Persian financial situation, and also, I understand, to ascertain the guarantees which may be available for future loans to the Persian Government.

[31842]

No. 198.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 149.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, September 21, 1906.*

[BAST.]

I request you to inform His Majesty's Consuls at Resht and Tabreez that they must not encourage refugees to seek shelter at the Consulates, or to remain, if already there.

Although we do not repudiate in principle the Persian custom of sheltering persons who are being unjustly persecuted, we object strongly to the custom being employed as a means to effect certain ends in a political movement with which His Majesty's Legation and Consulates should have nothing to do.

[32028]

No. 199.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 22.)*

(No. 253.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 22, 1906.*

REFUGEES at Tabreez and Resht.

I am repeating the instructions contained in your telegram No. 149 to Resht and Tabreez. I had long ago given Consuls orders in the same sense.

You may be assured that both the Consuls and I are doing everything possible, but the Persian Government are powerless, and there are no means at the disposal of His Majesty's Legation or His Majesty's Consulates for preventing thousands of determined people from invading their premises.

At Tabreez the troops threaten to join the people, and the garrison has sent a deputation to His Majesty's Consul-General to inform him that they intend to do so.

[31738]

No. 200.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 342.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, September 22, 1906.*

JOINT advance to Persian Government.

Your telegrams Nos. 224 and 229 received.

What is meant by the distinction between a "loan" and an "advance"? We do not understand. Does it imply that, apart from the 400,000*l.* to be advanced now, a further joint loan is in prospect?

We have contemplated lending (jointly with the Russian Government) to the Shah's Government the smallest sum needed by them to escape from their present financial embarrassment.

[32056]

No. 201.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)*

(No. 240.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 23, 1906.*

ADVANCE to Persian Government.

M. Isvolsky came to see me this afternoon to inform me that the Minister of Finance will be able to find Russia's share of the first moiety of the advance—that is, 100,000*l.*—and that the Russian Bank at Tehran have been instructed to be ready to advance that sum.

M. Isvolsky suggests details as to mode of payment, control over expenditure, &c., should be settled by us here, and that the Director of the Russian Bank, who is in St. Petersburg, should be present at our interviews. I suggested that Tehran was more suited to the settlement of these details.

The present condition of affairs is therefore as follows:—

Each Government is to make an immediate advance of 100,000*l.*, we securing guarantee of our share by lien on southern customs. Reimbursement of sums due to Imperial Bank and Russian Bank to be postponed for the present. If immediate necessities require a sum of more than 200,000*l.*, the Russian Government may have to apply to us for assistance.

Minister for Foreign Affairs seems to wish details as to mode of application of proceeds of advance, &c., should be arranged here, but I would submit it might be better that it should be done at Tehran.

[32057]

No. 202.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)*

(No. 242.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 23, 1906.*

ADVANCE to Persia. Your telegram No. 345 of the 23rd instant.

The original proposal, as made by the Persian Government to the Russian Legation at Tehran, was for a loan of 10,000,000 tomans, to be preceded by an immediate advance of 3,000,000 tomans (see my telegram No. 202 of the 31st August).

M. Zolski thought that the question of the loan should be left for discussion when our mutual relations in regard to Persia are arranged. The Russian and British Representatives in Persia thought that urgent necessities would be met by an advance of 400,000*l.* Russia wished that her share of this might be postponed, and suggested that advance of our share, i.e., 200,000*l.* should be made at once. In your telegram No. 324 of the 19th September, I was then instructed to propose that Russia should have a share in the advance of this first moiety, and this the Russian Government are now ready to do. They may, however, have to ask us to assist them in finding their further contribution of 100,000*l.* if the whole advance of 400,000*l.* is required.

[32058]

No. 203.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)*

(No. 243. Confidential.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 23, 1906.*

SPHERES of influence in Persia.

I was informed confidentially by M. Isvolsky this afternoon that M. Kokovtsov, the Minister of Finance, shared his Excellency's views as to our line from Birjand to Bunder Abbas, and that the north of Persia should provide a sphere for Russia. These views were their personal ones, and it was now necessary to persuade the Emperor and the General Staff of the Army to indorse them. He went on to say that should Russia be desirous of constructing railways in her sphere, it would be necessary for her to apply for neutral capital to build them with. He would not invite French capital for this purpose, but would seek for Dutch or Belgian. He also said that he was not sure how our line would be viewed by the General Staff, since it cut off a zone of strategical and political importance; as, however, the chief object of any arrangement which might be arrived at was the prevention of future collisions, both he and M. Kokovtsov personally favoured our line.

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2 Q

In reply, I said that the sphere which it was proposed should be taken by Russia had also political and strategical importance, and we therefore were on a footing of equality; and I added that His Majesty's Government considered that it was of paramount importance that we should obtain the sphere of interest which we had proposed. In reply to my question as to whether it would not be possible to effect an exchange of the Tehran-Meshed and Seistan-Meshed telegraph lines, pending the settlement of the whole Persian question, which I now foresaw would take some time, he begged that I would allow the telegraph question to be arranged at the same time as the rest. I did not give him an affirmative or a negative reply; but should you wish it, I will press him to treat this question separately.

M. Isvolsky said that he might not be able to consult the Emperor until the end of this week, since His Majesty might be absent until then on his cruise. It is, however, evident that the difficulties which are most to be feared will emanate from the General Staff.

I am of opinion that it would be advisable to leave Afghanistan and Thibet alone for the moment, and to confine our conversations to the question of Persia.

[32029]

No. 204.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)*

(No. 254.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 23, 1906.

SEISTAN disturbances. Your telegram No. 113 of the 17th ultimo.

I have received a telegram from His Majesty's Consul in Seistan, informing me that the Persian Government have sent orders to the special official charged with the inquiry to send the ringleaders in the riots and the Deputy Governor to His Majesty's Consulate, where they are to offer an apology and discuss the amount of compensation to be paid. Lieutenant Danke replied that his instructions were that he might accept the terms already agreed to by the special official, but that he had no instructions to accept less.

With your sanction I propose to approve His Majesty's Consul's reply.

[32030]

No. 205.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)*

(No. 255.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 23, 1906.

GERMAN Bank.

I have been informed verbally by German Chargé d'Affaires that the bank will be opened about the beginning of next year.

Manager of Imperial Bank of Persia informed.

[32332]

No. 206.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 24.)*

(No. 256.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 24, 1906.

REFORM movement.

Following sent to His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez:—

"I was informed last night by the Grand Vizier that he had sent to the authorities in Azerbaijan and in all other provinces printed copies of the Shah's Rescript granting a Constitution and of the Regulations for the Assembly. His Highness added that the elections for the Assembly are proceeding.

"You should inform the refugees of this, and make it clear to them at the same time that the Persian Government alone is concerned in the carrying out of the Shah's promises. Point out to them the absolute impossibility of constituting a National Assembly otherwise than slowly."

[32334]

No. 207.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 24.)*

(No. 257.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 24, 1906.

HIS Majesty's Consul in Seistan telegraphs as follows:—

"Russians have now taken control of this end of the line. They yesterday evening cut the connection leading into the Persian office and led the line direct into the Russian office, which is now separate from the Persian. Connection is therefore now given to the Persian office through the Russian office.

"I was verbally informed by the Muntahen-es-Saltaneh that the Minister of Telegraphs had telegraphed from Tehran that any such action on the part of the Russians was to be opposed, but no steps seem to have been taken to prevent it. He also said he had reason to believe that the Russians intend to take under their own control all the intermediate stations between Seistan and Meshed at which they have signallers."

The Grand Vizier distinctly promised me that Russian interference with the Seistan end of the line would not be allowed. I am addressing a note to his Highness on the subject.

The above telegram, I may mention, was sent over the Meshed-Seistan line, and, though dated 21st September, only reached me to-day.

[32338]

No. 208.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 24.)*

(No. 258.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 24, 1906.

ANGLO-RUSSIAN advance to Persian Government: Your telegram No. 151.

I am informed by M. Naus that in order to pay last year's salaries here and in the provinces a sum of from 200,000*l.* to 250,000*l.* is required immediately by the Persian Government. He would prefer that the latter sum should be advanced without delay.

The whole amount required is about 400,000*l.* to 500,000*l.*

The Persian Government are in urgent need of money, and, if it be given at once, the position of the Grand Vizier, which is somewhat precarious, will be strengthened.

[32344]

No. 209.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 24.)*

(No. 259.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 24, 1906.

THE Russians are trying to eject Governor-General of Khorassan, and Consul-General at Meshed suggests that I should support him.

It not unfrequently happens that His Majesty's Consuls, especially those nominated by the Government of India, ask me to take action on the ground that it will be to our interest and against that of Russia. His Majesty's Government at the same time have instructed me positively, in dealing with the present situation in Persia, to co-operate with the Russian Minister. It is obvious that we must either actively oppose Russia or endeavour to come to some arrangement with her. The result will only be confusion if, while I am endeavouring to make friends with the Russians here, His Majesty's Consuls continue to fight them.

I would suggest that the Russian Government might be invited to come to an arrangement by which instructions should be sent to the Consular officers of both Powers in Persia to desist from any action contrary to the interests of either party. The Persians at present take full advantage of the old rivalry, which continues unabated.

I wish at the same time to say distinctly that I am not satisfied as yet that Russia is playing fair. Her action with regard to the Meshed-Seistan line is suspicious.



[31943]

No. 210.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 353.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, September 24, 1906.*

JOINT advance to Persia.

I approve your action (see your telegram No. 234).

[32029]

No. 211.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. E. Grant Duff.*

(No. 153.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, September 24, 1906.*

RIOTS at Seistan.

I have received your telegram No. 254, and authorize you to approve, as amount of compensation, the sum of 100l.

[32424]

No. 212.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 25.)*

Sir,

*India Office, September 24, 1906.*

IN reply to Mr. Campbell's letter of the 20th instant, I am directed to say that Mr. Secretary Morley concurs in Sir E. Grey's proposal to instruct Mr. Grant Duff that Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas' proposed tour to the Turco-Persian frontier should be postponed in view of the disturbed condition of the frontier districts.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) HORACE WALPOLE.

[31810]

No. 213.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Lascelles.*

(No. 265.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, September 25, 1906.*

THE German Chargé d'Affaires called on the 18th instant, and drew attention to a statement in the "Times" to the effect that a German bank is to be established in Tehran. He said that, in order to avoid the possibility of any misunderstanding, he had been instructed to state the following facts:—

The Persian Government had recently offered a concession for a German bank in Tehran, and although nothing had so far been decided, it was proposed to accept this concession, since German merchants wished to have such a bank through which they could transact their commercial business. M. Tehirsky, however, wished it to be understood that the acceptance of this suggestion indicated no change in German policy as regards Persia, where Germany had no political interests, and only wished to develop her trade.

Sir C. Hardinge, who in my absence received Baron Stumm, asked if the concession was for a State Bank, and said that if this were so it would be an infringement of the charter of the Bank of Persia, which had the monopoly of Government business, and in which British capital was largely interested. He replied that he believed it to be a purely commercial bank, like any ordinary English or foreign bank in London.

Sir C. Hardinge informed Baron Stumm that at Cronberg M. Tehirsky had repeated to him more than once that Germany had no political interests whatever in Persia, her interests being purely commercial, and that he took note of the repetition of this statement, which he would not fail to report to me.

Sir C. Hardinge then said that a report had been current to the effect that German financiers were offering a loan to Persia, and asked if this were so. Baron Stumm replied that he had heard nothing of such a report, and did not believe it to be true. Sir C. Hardinge added that the Persian Government had applied to us and to the Russians for a loan, and that the question of each country offering to advance a small sum was under consideration; but that if a German loan should be also in prospect

there would necessarily be a conflict on the subject of the security to be offered, since the customs receipts were the only security worth having in Persia, and the northern customs had already been hypothecated as security for a Russian loan and the southern customs for an English loan. Baron Stumm repeated his assertion that he had heard nothing of this rumour and disbelieved it.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) EDWARD GREY.

[32545]

No. 214.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 26.)*

(No. 246.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 26, 1906.*

— I HAVE been asked by Minister for Foreign Affairs if I have any news as regards the Shah's health, which he says has become worse.

[32553]

No. 215.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 26.)*

(No. 261.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 26, 1906.*

REFORM movement: My telegram No. 250.

His Majesty's Consulate at Resht has now been vacated by the refugees.

[32056]

No. 216.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 364.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, September 26, 1906.*

JOINT Persian advance.

See your telegram No. 240 of the 23rd instant.

His Majesty's Government are of opinion that the arrangement of details would be more practically carried out at Tehran than in London or St. Petersburg.

You may inform M. Isvolsky of this.

[32626]

No. 217.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 27.)*

Sir,

*India Office, September 26, 1906.*

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to inclose, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 23rd instant, on the subject of an advance in certain contingencies to the Persian Government, from Indian revenues, in return for a concession of the Karun irrigation scheme.

Mr. Morley has no information as to the contingencies contemplated by the Government of India beyond that which is given in the telegram from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran of the 18th September, on which the Viceroy's suggestions are based. But even if it should be found that the Persian Government are negotiating a loan in connection with the Karun scheme, independently of the Russian and British Governments, Mr. Morley doubts whether, in the present position of the negotiations with Russia, it would be practicable to make any advance to the Persian Government otherwise than in agreement with the Russian Government.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) HORACE WALPOLE.

Inclosure in No. 217.

*Government of India to Mr. Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

September 23, 1906.

KARUN irrigation. Rumour of a loan by Germany to Persia for purposes of this scheme, referred to in telegram from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, dated the 18th instant. The Sheikh has asked us to keep him informed, and says that he does not understand how we could agree to transaction.

It will be in the recollection of His Majesty's Government that a British engineer was deputed, at request of Foreign Office, to investigate scheme, and has been engaged on this work for some time past. This officer has reported Van Roggen's scheme to be impracticable, but is preparing a feasible project calculated to irrigate a very considerable area, though the utility of Karun as a navigable stream would probably be destroyed in consequence.

In our telegram of the 9th January last we have already intimated that any concession for Karun irrigation, should, in our opinion, be obtained for British enterprise, if possible, the object being partly to counterbalance any loss of trade which might be the result of closing the river to navigation, and partly for political reasons, to enable us to secure possession of harbours in Khor Musa. In view of securing such a concession, we have more than once expressed our willingness to make a loan to the Persian Government. We are still ready to do this; and, further, to render assistance in executing the scheme, in so far as it can be shown to be feasible, at a cost which would prove remunerative.

Intrusion of German influence into Khor Musa and Karun regions, would, we venture to think, be highly prejudicial to our interests, and it was a fear of this result that in some measure made us deprecate drawing at Bunder Abbas the line of British concessions. The difficulties which we have already set forth in our telegram of the 18th instant as likely to result from the proposed division of sphere of influence, would be intensified by German intrusion.

It appears to us that a British loan for the Karun irrigation scheme seems all the more necessary, in view of the decision recorded by Defence Committee on the 26th July, that it was essential to retain full control over the tract at the end of the Bagdad Railway, which contains both shores of the Shat-el-Arab. Germany will acquire influence over the eastern shore of the Shat-el-Arab, and over the whole of Mohammerrah, if she is allowed to make a loan.

We gather from your telegram of the 20th instant, that it will be six months, which might be too late, before Russia is able to find money; and it seems probable that, in order to anticipate German action, she would agree to the concession being granted to us. Any ultimate settlement, as to spheres of influence, would not be prejudicially affected by our acquisition of the concession, which would, on the contrary, be of advantage in negotiations in the future, and would go far to secure a hold upon the lower section of the Bagdad Railway, in the event of the Karun tract remaining with us.

We note that, in his conversation with Sir A. Nicolson, M. Isvolsky does not appear to have suggested that the whole of the Persian littoral west of Bunder Abbas should be given to Russia. It may be, therefore, that she will not object to retention of the Mohammerrah region by us, especially if we are able to forestall German action by a prompt advance of money. We would add that support would be secured to two important concessions which British enterprise is already working, viz., the Lar and Bakhtiari roads, both terminating at Ahwaz, by our retention of the Karun region, and this is an incidental advantage of the scheme.

(Repeated to Tehran and Bushire.)

[32058]

No. 218.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 369.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 27, 1906.

REFER to your telegrams No. 234 of the 21st and Nos. 240 and 243 of the 23rd instant: Joint loan to the Persian Government.

The desire of His Majesty's Government, in co-operating with Russia for this purpose, has been to obtain a general settlement of the relations in Persia between the two Powers.

His Majesty's Government would, therefore, prefer that the Russian Government should at once, as the starting point of common action, consent to the immediate settlement of the Seistan telegraph difficulty and the delimitation of our sphere of influence in Eastern Persia by the recognition of the Bunder Abbas-Birjand line. This course would not be precluded by our acceptance of what appears to be M. Isvolsky's view—namely, that it would not be advisable to require any conditions from the Persian Government in return for our advance. If, however, the immediate payment of the first moiety, before you have succeeded in arriving at an arrangement on the above terms, is rendered necessary by the exigencies of the present Persian situation, we will not object to making our contribution of 100,000*l.* This step would have the merit of being the first towards an agreement between the two Powers.

Unless, however, the Russian Government recognize the Bunder Abbas-Birjand line, and a settlement of the telegraph difficulty accordingly is reached, His Majesty's Government will be unable to contribute to the second moiety. You should make it quite clear to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

[32344]

No. 219.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 375.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 27, 1906.

ANGLO-RUSSIAN negotiations respecting Persia.

It is very much to be desired that the rivalry between the British and Russian Consular officers in Persia, spoken of in telegram No. 259 from Tehran of the 24th instant, should cease during the progress of these negotiations.

With regard to the suggestion in the second paragraph of the above-mentioned telegram, you may use your own discretion as to whether you should speak to M. Isvolsky in such a sense.

[32058]

No. 220.

*Foreign Office to Treasury.*

(Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 28, 1906.

I AM directed by Sir E. Grey to state, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, that for some time past the financial situation in Persia has occupied the serious attention of His Majesty's Government.

When at the close of last year repeated requests for an advance were made to His Majesty's Government by the Persian Government, it was recognized that such a proposal could not then be usefully entertained, since His Majesty's Government would have no control over the application of the loan, and they had reason to fear that it would not be employed to advantage, and might ultimately serve to increase the embarrassments of the Persian Exchequer.

In these circumstances, the Russian Government were approached with a view to effecting an arrangement, by which the Persian Government should no longer be in a position to obtain loans from Great Britain and Russia by alternately playing off one Power against the other. The Russian Government fully recognized the force of this view, and it was agreed that no advance should henceforth be made by either Power without previous consultation between the two Governments.

At the beginning of this month it became apparent, however, that the Persian Government was in serious need of pecuniary assistance, in order to meet the regular charges of the Administration; and, from information which had reached His Majesty's Government and the Russian Government, it was clear that, should such assistance not otherwise be forthcoming, requests of the Persian Government would, to the serious prejudice of the interests of Great Britain and Russia, be more favourably entertained in other quarters.

The two Governments accordingly decided, after consultation with their representatives at Tehran, that it would be expedient to make, in equal moieties, an immediate advance of 200,000*l.* to the Persian Government, and a further advance of 200,000*l.* at a later date; and they agreed that no portion of this loan should be applied to the repayment of former loans negotiated through the Imperial Bank of Persia or the Russian Banque des Prêts.



It is proposed that the mode of application of the contemplated loan and the details of repayment should be decided at Tehran or St. Petersburg forthwith.

Sir Edward Grey has been in consultation with the India Office on the subject, and it has been agreed that the British moiety of the advance shall be made in equal portions from Indian and Imperial funds, and shall be secured on the customs of the ports of Southern Persia and the Persian Gulf.

The rate of interest will be the same as in the case of the advances to the Persian Government in April 1903 and September 1904.

It is therefore proposed that the Government of India should at once provide a sum of 50,000*l.* to enable the Imperial Bank of Persia to make an advance of that amount to the Persian Government at 5 per cent. interest, of which 4 per cent. would be remitted as received to the Government of India, while the Bank would retain a commission of 1 per cent. per annum for its services in the matter.

I am accordingly to request that, if the Lords Commissioners concur in the above proposal, which has already formed the subject of verbal communications with your Department, the necessary instructions may be issued in order that a sum of 50,000*l.* may be paid, under similar conditions, from Imperial funds to the Imperial Bank of Persia for the purpose in question.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) CHARLES HARDINGE.

[32058]

No. 221.

*Foreign Office to Imperial Bank of Persia.*

(Secret.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, September 28, 1906.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to inform you that His Majesty's Government have decided, in agreement with the Russian Government, to make a joint advance, not exceeding 100,000*l.*, to the Persian Government, to be exclusively devoted to the pressing requirements of the Administration.

This advance is to be made by the British and Russian Governments, in equal moieties, through the Imperial Bank of Persia and the Russian Banque des Prêts respectively; and, subject to the settlement of details, it has been arranged that 200,000*l.* shall be paid to the Persian Government at an early date.

It is proposed that the British share of this advance (100,000*l.*) shall be furnished in equal amounts from Imperial and Indian funds; that it shall be secured on the customs of the ports of Southern Persia and the Persian Gulf; and that the conditions as to interest shall be the same as in the case of the advances made to the Persian Government in April 1903 and September 1904.

I am accordingly to inform you that a draft for 50,000*l.*, to the order of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, will be forwarded to you at an early date, and I am to add that Sir E. Grey is in consultation with the Secretary of State for India as to the payment of a further sum of 50,000*l.*, to be provided from Indian funds, for the same purpose.

I am to request that, pending the receipt of further instructions, the above sum of 100,000*l.* may be placed to the order of His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) CHARLES HARDINGE.

[32876]

No. 222.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 29.)*

(No. 265.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 29, 1906.*

MESHED-SEISTAN line.

Consul-General at Meshed suggests that a British signaller should be placed at Khaf and an extra signaller be provided for Meshed. The signaller at Turbat-i-Haidari recently complained that communication with Seistan and intermediate stations was cut off.

I understand that the extra signaller for Meshed has already been sanctioned.

[32893]

No. 223.

*Mr. E. Grant Duff to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 29.)*

(No. 266.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, September 29, 1906.*

THE Shah's dropsy, I hear, has increased, and his health is less satisfactory. I hear this from a sure source.

[32883]

No. 224.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 29.)*

(No. 250.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 29, 1906.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 369 of the 27th instant, I have the honour to report that I called on M. Isvolsky this morning and inquired of him whether he was able to give me a reply with regard to the settlement of details of expenditure of first moiety of advance to Persia at Tehran, and not at St. Petersburg. He replied that he was in consultation with the Minister of Finance, and would very shortly give me an answer. I then said that it was most desirable, in the opinion of my Government, that our line from Birjand to Bundar Abbas should be recognized by the Russian Government before, at any rate, the second advance to Persia was made. I explained the reasons as laid down in your telegram above mentioned. The Minister for Foreign Affairs referred at some length to the question of spheres of interest, and emphasized the difficulty he would have in inducing other Ministries to consent to our line, and he asked me if my Government made the acceptance by Russia of the line in question a *sine qua non* to their joining in the second moiety of advance. I said that, to speak frankly, that was the case. He replied that in those circumstances his position would be rendered very difficult, and if the second moiety was urgently required by the Persian Government, Russia would have to advance it herself. She was desirous of our co-operation, but she could find the money alone.

M. Isvolsky begged me to submit to you most earnestly that we should not jeopardize a future arrangement by rushing matters. He was himself favourable to our line, but he would tell me quite frankly that he would have a hard fight to obtain it. He would far prefer to leave the question of spheres of interest alone for the moment, and to make the whole advance conjointly. He dwelt on his aim of eventually drawing up a Convention embracing all questions at issue in Persia, Afghanistan, and Thibet, and of arriving at an arrangement by which, humanly speaking, all danger of future rivalry and conflict would be removed. All the questions hung together; no one could be settled independently and apart. He thought that to divulge our cards prematurely would be most imprudent, not to one another or to the Persian Government, but to third parties, and we should be doing this if we arranged at once merely one part of the whole scheme. There would be no further reason for reserves once the whole Convention was settled.

I said I would let you know his views. I have no doubt as to his sincerity, and I think we may frighten him off the whole question if we press him too hard as to our line. He was perfectly friendly, and there was nothing petulant in his allusion to Russia being able to advance second moiety herself. I expect they could find the money at a pinch. I think they suspect we may be trying to take advantage of their internal difficulties. They are very sensitive just at present. If I may be allowed to make a suggestion, I would recommend joint action as to the whole of the advance, and that we should not insist on the acceptance of our line as an indispensable condition to our co-operation.

[32884]

No. 225.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 29.)*

(No. 251.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, September 29, 1906.*

MESHED-SEISTAN telegraph.

I had a serious conversation with M. Isvolsky this morning with regard to the above question, and said that unless it was settled promptly the matter might become a very troublesome one.

[1660]

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I again proposed the compromise of exchanging lines, and advanced obvious arguments in favour of this scheme. He said he would make a study of the matter, but submitted for your consideration that it might create considerable noise, and that an appeal by the Persian Government to a third party might result. He would still far prefer it should be deferred until the conclusion of our general Agreement. I said that its treatment apart would be an easy matter, and that I did not see why it should be the cause of more comment or excitement than would be our joint advance, and that if the Persian Government did see that our two countries were working together, it would be of no disadvantage to us. I gave him to understand that our participation in the second moiety of the advance would be influenced by an immediate settlement of this question, but I will await your instructions as to renewing pressure on this question in view of the Minister's observations reported in my immediately preceding telegram.

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[32885]

No. 226.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 29.)*

(No. 252.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 29, 1906.

PERSIA: Your telegram No. 375 of the 27th instant.

Minister for Foreign Affairs says that he is most anxious that there should be a cessation of rivalry between our agents in Persia during the negotiations. He had already sent instructions in that sense, and he would cause them to be repeated. He said that already one official, whose influence he considered injurious, had been removed from the Legation at Tehran.

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[32886]

No. 227.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 30.)*

(No. 253.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 30, 1906.

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that he agrees to the details as to the mode of payment of the advance to Persia being settled by our respective Ministers, and not in St. Petersburg. The Russian Minister and Russian Bank have received instructions to that effect.

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